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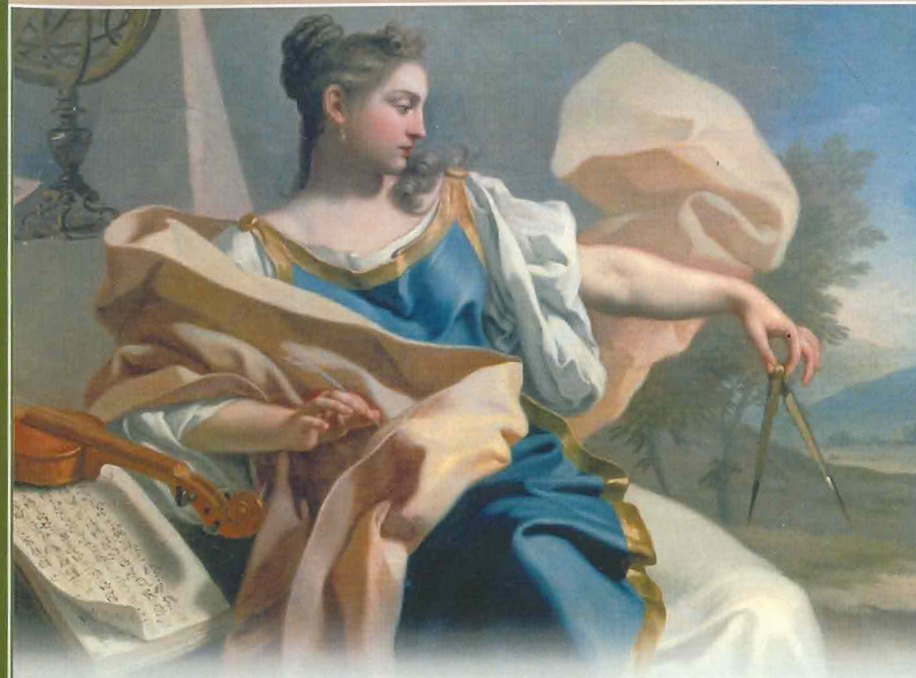
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The Art of the Northern Renaissance

Taught by: Professor Catherine B. Scallen
 Case Western Reserve University

Part 3

Course Guidebook



THE TEACHING COMPANY®

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Catherine B. Scallen is Associate Professor of Art History at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. She received her undergraduate degree in history from Wellesley College in Wellesley, Massachusetts, as a Wellesley Scholar (i.e., *magna cum laude*). She received her M.A. with honors from the Williams College Graduate Program in the History of Art, in Williamstown, Massachusetts. In Williamstown, she co-curated the museum exhibition “Cubism and American Photography” for the Robert Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute. Her Ph.D. in art history was awarded by Princeton University.

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Professor Scallen’s scholarship has centered on the art of the 17th-century Dutch artist Rembrandt van Rijn, the subject of many of her articles. Her book, *Rembrandt, Reputation, and the Practice of Connoisseurship*, was published in 2004. She has also served as a faculty study leader on trips to the Netherlands and Belgium for the Cleveland Museum of Art, Princeton University, and Case Western Reserve University and has provided audio commentary for “Flemish Paintings from the Hermitage Museum,” an exhibition of 17th-century Flemish art held at the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto.

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The Art of the Northern Renaissance

Scope:

This course of 36 lectures is an introduction to the rich and varied art of the Northern Renaissance from about 1400 to about 1600. It surveys two types of art above all: oil painting and printmaking in the regions that now comprise modern Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands, along with a brief look at Switzerland and England with the career of Hans Holbein the Younger.

The term *Northern Renaissance* has become standard when referring to much of northern European art in the 15th and 16th centuries and allows for pointed comparison with Italian Renaissance art. While Italian Renaissance art is better known today, both traditions were admired and imitated at the time. During the 15th century, some of the most important patrons of Northern Renaissance art were Italian themselves, and Italian artists were keenly aware of the innovations introduced by their northern counterparts. In the 16th century, it became more common for northern artists to travel in Italy, where they learned about the art of antiquity as well as that of the Renaissance.

Many kinds of artworks were made and treasured during this period: both large- and small-scale sculpture, precious metalwork, tapestries, and architecture. Yet the most consistently innovative work was executed in paint or in print. Fortunately, these media also claim the highest survival rate of artworks from the Northern Renaissance. Thus, the concentration on these media (with an occasional look at drawings, primarily as tools used in the process of painting) makes sense in an introductory survey.

The impact of political, religious, economic, and cultural changes on the art of the epoch is one essential focus of the course. The period from 1400 to 1600, the transition from the medieval world to the early modern era, was a highly eventful one throughout Europe. The consolidation of power by central states, the rise of the Protestant Reformation, increased international trade, the emergence of the middle classes, and the growing cultural interest in themes from the secular world and from classical antiquity—all these developments had powerful effects on the world of the artist, what he (almost always still a he) painted or executed in print, and often even how (in what style) he made it. For instance, the very invention and dissemination of printmaking in Europe during this era is related to the growth of disposable income and increased literacy across social classes.

The course topics are presented largely in a chronological and geographical format, following the careers of individual artists. The first 12 lectures cover 15th-century art in the Low Countries (modern Belgium and the Netherlands). The next 12 consider painting and prints made in what is now modern Germany, with a glance at a few artists active in Alsace (now in France), Switzerland, and England. For the last 12 lectures, we return to the Low Countries to study 16th-

century art. Such a schema allows us to understand the impact of innovations pioneered by certain artists on those who followed them, as well as the impact of societal changes on the art world. The emphasis in the discussion of each artist is multiple: The development of artistic style is traced, but the meaning of the subject and the function of each work are also considered. This allows us to properly relate the history of the art as understood in a more comprehensive sense than just the history of style.

We will examine a small group of artists through more than one lecture: Jan van Eyck, Rogier van der Weyden, Albrecht Dürer, Hans Holbein, Hieronymus Bosch, and Pieter Bruegel. These artists are singled out because each was singularly influential for his development of style and interpretation and choice of subjects. Unsurprisingly, each of them also seems to have been more than usually aware of his importance. Such a sense of self was a stark change from medieval society, where outside of the classes of the nobility and the clergy, the individual was of little moment. The changing status and self-consciousness of the artist as a figure worthy of respect and admiration is emphasized throughout the course.

We will also pay significant attention to the role of the patron, the person (or group) who either commissioned a work of art or bought one ready-made. Expansion of patronage beyond the realm of the highest nobility and the Christian Church is one of the cardinal developments of the era and would greatly affect how artists worked and what subjects they depicted.

We will also explore how paintings and prints were made, looking at such issues as who worked in a painter's workshop and what they did, how prints were designed and executed, and where these works of art were bought and sold. The beginnings of the open art market can be traced to the 16th century in northern Europe specifically, and its development is one of the signal accomplishments of the Northern Renaissance.

Finally, we will examine the changing nature of European society in this era, so long dominated by religion, for its influence on art. Even before the Protestant Reformation, aspects of spiritual devotion were shifting to an increased attention to private, individualized prayer. New kinds of artworks served the needs of this new form of devotion. But with the Protestant Reformation itself, the function of art in society would be questioned, particularly the purpose of religious art. Spurred on by this movement and by a widespread interest in aspects of culture other than religion, many secular subjects arise or expand in this period, such as portraits, landscapes, mythological tales, and moralizing scenes of daily life. The role of art in society changed from primarily serving religious needs and, secondarily, the political requirements of rulers to that of a multivalent medium, providing decoration, entertainment, instruction, preservation of personal memory, and status.

Lecture Twenty-Five

David and the Master of Mary of Burgundy

Scope: Gerard David (c. 1460–1523) simultaneously built on and updated the legacy of earlier Northern Renaissance artists. His balance of conventional iconography and modernized style struck a chord during a time of change. His emphasis on landscape as a conveyer of mood is typical of his art. Hired by ecclesiastical and civic patrons, David worked for years in Bruges but in 1515 joined the painters' guild in Antwerp, indicating that city's artistic dominance in the 16th century. David tried his hand at manuscript illumination, which remained in demand despite the rise of printing. One of the finest manuscript illuminators of the time was the Master of Mary of Burgundy in Ghent, who took his name from *The Hours of Mary of Burgundy*, a private devotional book to which he contributed four illuminations.

Outline

- I. Gerard David was born in Oudewater in the northern Netherlands. By 1484, he was in Bruges and entered the painter's corporation there. His career was based on ecclesiastical and civic patronage. David neither signed nor dated his paintings; thus, only a few documented works can be precisely dated.
- II. David's commission for a town-hall painting in Bruges was to be a Last Judgment, but a diptych of the *Judgment of Cambyse* and the *Flaying of Sisamnes* was substituted.
 - A. After a 6th-century-B.C. judge, Sisamnes, was found guilty of taking bribes, the Persian king Cambyse ordered him flayed alive. The painting follows in the tradition of secular justice scenes.
 - B. In the *Judgment of Cambyse*, the judge in the background takes a bribe, while in the foreground, Cambyse confronts Sisamnes.
 - C. The *Flaying of Sisamnes* shows the gruesome punishment carried out. In the background, Sisamnes's son, who succeeded his father as judge, sits on a throne covered with flayed skin. Some of the figures in the crowd are likely portraits of Bruges city leaders.
 - D. The subject may refer to the Bruges uprising against Maximilian in the 1480s–1490s. Aldermen on Maximilian's side could have pointed to the work as an example of severe justice for a corrupt civic leader.
- III. More typical of David's art is the triptych *Baptism of Christ*, which features an idyllic setting and gentle mood.
 - A. The patron of this work, Jan de Trompes, is shown on the wings with his children and first wife. Patron saints John the Evangelist and

- Elizabeth of Hungary accompany the family.
- B. The central panel presents Christ's baptism by Saint John the Baptist. Christ stands in the center, with God the Father and the dove of the Holy Spirit in the sky above.
 - C. The format is traditional for a work of the early 16th century, yet change is apparent in the creation of mood through landscape, here showing precise details of flowers, water, foliage, and atmospheric perspective.
- IV. David joined the confraternity of Our Lady of the Dry Tree by 1508. In 1509, he donated the *Virgo inter Virgines* (*The Virgin among the Virgins*) to a Carmelite convent in Bruges.
- A. David suppresses the setting, keeping attention on the figures in a frieze-like arrangement. The Virgin and Child are accompanied by angels and female virgin saints, including Saints Catherine and Barbara.
 - B. David presents this imaginary scene, with saints from different eras, as convincingly naturalistic.
 - C. Portraits of the artist and his wife in the corners are signs of authorship.
 - D. After 1493, Bruges had recovered from the financial hardship suffered during its revolt against Maximilian, but it was no longer an economic hub. David's modernization of earlier Netherlandish iconography would have been a comforting connection to past prosperity.
- V. David clearly revered his predecessors.
- A. In a metalpoint drawing of *Four Heads* from the *Ghent Altarpiece*, David drew heads of popes and bishops from the Van Eycks' *Ghent Altarpiece*, using an old-fashioned medium in a freer, sketchier way.
 - B. Like his predecessors, David produced a number of versions of popular compositions. The *Deposition*, for example, shows grieving figures against an extensive landscape that diffuses the emotional content, thus contrasting with Rogier's *Deposition* of 80 years earlier.
- VI. Another popular theme from David's workshop was the widely told story of *The Rest on the Flight into Egypt*.
- A. Joseph gathers fruit while Mary waits on a rocky ledge, holding the Christ Child, who plays with a bunch of grapes.
 - B. A beautiful landscape with careful spatial recession aids the mood. The grapes refer to the Eucharistic wine that Christ will offer, but the emphasis is on the tender relationship of mother and child.
 - C. David made several compositions and many versions of this subject. Pattern drawings likely were used to transfer the design.
- VII. The *Virgin and Child with the Milk Soup* shows a tidy domestic space.
- A. The painting at first appears to be a secular depiction of maternal devotion, but its religious content is revealed in symbols: an enclosed garden, a sign of Mary's purity; bread, a Eucharistic reference; and the apple, a symbol of Jesus and Mary's role as the new Adam and Eve.
 - B. Once more, David balances old and new, using conventional iconography but a modernized style.
 - C. The existence of multiple copies of this and other compositions indicates that David had a steady business in ready-made paintings.
- VIII. The triptych *Nativity with Donors and Saints Jerome and Leonard* also suggests the balance of tradition and innovation in David's art.
- A. A woman is shown in the guise of Saint Catherine, and a man is accompanied by the pig of Saint Anthony Abbot. Saint Jerome is on the left and Saint Leonard on the right.
 - B. The painting shows David's abilities as a landscape painter and his use of setting to support mood, more solemn than joyous.
 - C. The *Forest Scene*, now separated from the triptych, appears to be an independent landscape painting, but it contains religious content, for example, the two asses and one ox mentioned in Isaiah 32:11–20.
 - D. The painting powerfully evokes the beauties of nature and of light effects and can be seen as a precursor to later independent landscapes.
- IX. In 1515, David joined the Antwerp painter's guild, indicating his awareness of the shift of the market from Bruges to Antwerp.
- A. In the first decade of the 16th century, the Corporation of Imagemakers, to which Bruges painters belonged, sought to subsume the Guild of the Book Trades, to which manuscript illuminators belonged.
 - B. David may have tried manuscript illumination. *Virgin among the Virgins*, though unsigned, has the hallmarks of his style.
- X. Bruges and Ghent were centers of manuscript illumination from 1475 into the 16th century. One of the finest illuminators was Ghent's Master of Mary of Burgundy, who takes his name from *The Hours of Mary of Burgundy*.
- A. *The Hours of Mary of Burgundy* contains the work of several illuminators. The date for the Master of Mary of Burgundy's four illuminations is suggested as 1470–80.
 - B. The frontispiece shows a woman, believed to be Mary of Burgundy, reading a book of hours in front of an open window. Jewelry, two carnations, and a vase of irises sit on the windowsill.
 1. Through the window, the Virgin and Child have appeared as a vision in a church. A group of women, likely including Mary of Burgundy, kneel before them in adoration.

2. The irises symbolize the Virgin's sorrow. The two carnations, a symbol of engagement, are explained by the man in the church, identified as Mary of Burgundy's fiancé, Maximilian.
 3. The naturalistic rendering of a vision granted to the believer was a common theme in early Netherlandish art.
 4. The master uses the surface of the page to create the illusion of two convincing spaces. The scene of the Virgin and Child oscillates between a flat picture and a three-dimensional view.
- C. *Christ Nailed to the Cross* shows a rosary and book of hours. Viewers take the absent owner's place, seeing a scene from Christ's Passion.
1. The book of hours, opened to a scene of the Crucifixion, helps stimulate the vision above.
 2. Two women look directly at us. Our contemporary status and the historical status of the figures are brought together.
 3. Inspiration for this work can be traced to the 14th-century Modern Devotion movement, which stressed individual engagement with sacred subjects as part of a desire to imitate Christ.
 4. As Christ is nailed to the cross, the Virgin Mary is held by Saint John the Evangelist in a pose some attribute to Hugo van der Goes.

XI. *The Hours of Engelbert of Nassau* refers to a nobleman in the service of the dukes of Burgundy.

- A. The master painted the borders to suggest a series of niches in a wall, in which vessels of various kinds could be found. Such highly illusionistic border decoration became a popular characteristic of the Ghent-Bruges school of illumination in the last quarter of the 15th century.
- B. The folios depicting the *Journey of the Magi* and the *Adoration of the Magi* are bold in design, for example, the elegant, pose of the Virgin Mary in the *Adoration* scene and the sense of three dimensions.
- C. One bowl is decorated with the monogram of Jesus Christ, IHS. Two vases contain peacock feathers, symbols of resurrection. A medicine jar and an iris remind us of the *Portinari Altarpiece*.

Works Discussed:

Gerard David: *The Judgment of Cambyzes* and *The Flaying of Sisamnes*, 1498, oil on panel, each panel: 5'11¼" x 5'2¾", Groeningemuseum, Bruges.

Triptych with the Baptism of Christ and Donors, 1505, oil on panel; central panel: 4'4" x 3'2", each wing: 4'4" x 1'4½"; Groeningemuseum; Bruges.

Virgo inter Virgines (Virgin among the Virgins), c. 1509, oil on panel, 3'10½" x 6'11½", Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen.

Four Heads (after Details from the Ghent Altarpiece), c. 1490, metalpoint on cream prepared laid paper, 2¾ x 2½", National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Purchased 1958.

Deposition, c. 1510–15, oil on linen (mounted on mahogany panel), 4'8 1/8" x 3'8¼", Henry Clay Frick Bequest, ©The Frick Collection, New York.

The Rest on the Flight into Egypt, c. 1505, oil on panel, 1'4 ½" x 1'4 5/8", Andrew W. Mellon Collection, Image © 2007 Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Virgin and Child with the Milk Soup, c. 1520, oil on panel, 1'1¼" x 11½", Musée d'Art Ancien, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts, Brussels.

The Nativity with Donors and Saints Jerome and Leonard, c. 1510–15, oil on canvas transferred from wood, central panel: 2'11½" x 2'4", each wing: 2' 11½" x 1' 3/8", The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Forest Scene, c. 1510–15, oil on panel, each panel: 2'11½" x 1', Royal Cabinet of Paintings, Mauritshuis, The Hague.

Virgo inter Virgines, c. 1505–10, tempera on vellum, 7 x 5 1/3", The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.

Master of Mary of Burgundy: *The Hours of Mary of Burgundy: Mary of Burgundy Reading*, 1470–80, tempera on parchment, 9 x 6½", Austrian National Library Vienna, Picture Archive, Vienna.

Christ Nailed to the Cross, c. 1470–80, tempera on parchment, 9 x 6½", Austrian National Library Vienna, Picture Archive, Vienna.

Adoration of the Magi and Magi Riding Home with Attendants, c. 1475, illumination on parchment, 5½ x 3¾", Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, 2007, MSS. Douce 219-220; fol. 145v-146v, Oxford.

Essential Reading:

Snyder, *Northern Renaissance Art*, pp. 203–212, 170–174.

Supplementary Reading:

Ainsworth, *Gerard David: Purity of Vision in an Age of Transition*.

Pächt, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, chapter. 9.

Kren and McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance: The Triumph of Flemish Manuscript Painting in Europe*.

Inglis, *The Hours of Mary of Burgundy*.

Van Miegroet, *Gerard David*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Was Gerard David an old-fashioned artist or a progressive one? Is this a false dichotomy for interpreting his career?

2. How did the Master of Mary of Burgundy confront the central spatial problem of naturalistic painting: Should the actual surface of the support (in this case, the vellum page) be acknowledged or not?

Lecture Twenty-Six

Hieronymus Bosch

Scope: Hieronymus Bosch (c. 1450–1516) is probably the most famous Northern Renaissance painter, yet his work is also the most widely misinterpreted. Although he helped introduce secular subjects into the realm of high art, he did so in traditional moral contexts. His altarpieces, even those that appear to challenge traditional notions of sacred art, support the orthodox view of humankind as sinful and doomed without God's saving grace. Born to a family of painters, Bosch worked in the town of 's Hertogenbosch in the northern Netherlands. He belonged to the confraternity the Brotherhood of Our Lady, some of whose members were his patrons, along with Dutch nobility and wealthy merchants. Bosch's fantastic imagery is undeniably unique and sometimes strange. In this first look at this artist, we will survey his career to understand the development of his ideas and idiosyncratic style.

Outline

- I. Hieronymus Bosch is probably the most famous Northern Renaissance painter, yet his work is also the most widely misinterpreted. He helped popularize scenes of secular life but retained a moralizing context. Likewise, his altarpieces seem to break with traditional notions of sacred art, but their content hews to the orthodox view of humankind as sinful and doomed without God's saving grace. He is also known for his fantastic imagery.
 - A. Born to a family of painters in 1450, Bosch was actually named Jeroen van Aken. His family was from Germany but by the 15th century had settled in the town of 's Hertogenbosch, a trade center in the northern Netherlands and a major center for the Modern Devotion movement.
 - B. The first record of Bosch as a painter dates from 1480–81, when he married Aleijt Goyarts van den Meervenne. Her status and wealth allowed Bosch relative artistic freedom.
 - C. Bosch belonged to the confraternity of the Brotherhood of Our Lady. In 1488, he became a sworn member, an unusual position for a painter. His first known commission came from the confraternity in 1493.
 - D. Bosch's patrons included members of the confraternity, Dutch nobility, and wealthy merchants. These patrons would have been well educated, which may help explain the esoteric nature of Bosch's imagery.
 - E. Bosch's name appears on only seven paintings; none bears a date. Thus, his work is hard to date accurately or even place in a convincing

chronological progression. Given these limits, Bosch scholars have tended to categorize his work according to subject matter.

II. *The Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* entered the Spanish royal collection of Philip II in the mid-16th century; Philip was an avid collector of Bosch's paintings.

- A. The highly symmetrical composition shows four circles surrounding a larger circle and banderoles at the top and bottom of the painting.
- B. The four smaller circles are decorated with the "four last things," that is, experiences from death onward. A dying man receives the last rites of the church (upper left), while Christ appears for the Last Judgment (upper right). Figures enter heaven, shown as a church (lower right), while the damned are in hell (lower left).
- C. The banderoles' Old Testament inscriptions refer to the foolishness of humans in not moderating their own behavior. The large roundel indicates the paths taken by humans through the seven deadly sins. Anger, avarice, envy, gluttony, luxury, pride, and sloth are acted out in individual scenes.
 - 1. In the scene of anger, two figures in a landscape have a dispute. A woman tries to intervene, to no avail.
 - 2. In the scene of pride, a woman in a tidy room with a jewelry chest looks into a mirror held by a demon.
- D. Rays of light from these scenes lead to the center, where a half-length figure of Christ is shown. An inscription reads, "Beware, beware, God sees." An enormous eye of God takes everything in. This metaphor—that we should remember the consequences of our behavior because God sees all and never forgets—is important in all of Bosch's art.
- E. This work shows the hallmarks of Bosch's style: small vignettes adding up to a larger message, a deadly serious kind of humor, and an emphasis on the choice of humans to follow virtue or vice. The work presents traditional ideas with innovation.

III. *The Death of the Miser* reprises the theme of the battle for the soul at the time of death. An old man in bed looks toward the door, where Death enters as a skeleton with an arrow. An angel bids the man to look up at a crucifix.

- A. Fantastic demons are scattered around the room. One tempts the miser with a money bag; another lurks in a chest.
- B. A man drops coins into a bag held by a demon inside a money chest. This appears to be the miser earlier in life. He is also a hypocrite, because he fingers a rosary while hoarding money.
- C. The theme of the sudden arrival of death, one we've seen before, reflects interest in *Ars Moriendi* (*Art of Dying Well*), a popular early book in which the final battle for the soul is described, as demons

tempt and angels protect the dying person. Bosch's painting suggests that it may be too late for this man, a more pessimistic view than was typical.

- D. The painting contains inexplicable elements, such as the paper with a red wax seal held by one demon and the armor and sword in the foreground. Some of these details may have been discussed between Bosch and his patron.
- IV. Bosch's penchant for hermit saints is seen in *Saint John the Baptist*, which may have been paired with a panel of *Saint John the Evangelist*. John the Baptist is slumped over, leaning on a grass-covered outcrop. The landscape is green and peaceful, yet strange, fruit-bearing plants take us away from the everyday world.
- A. The hermit was a good model because of his piety and voluntary withdrawal from the world and its material seductions. He is the anti-type of the miser-sinner.
 - B. As in Geertgen tot Sint Jans's *Saint John the Baptist in the Wilderness*, there is a pose of melancholy. But in Bosch's work, Saint John seems almost oppressed by his thoughts and visions.
- V. Hermits were subject to temptation and distress despite their withdrawal from everyday life. The *St. Anthony Triptych* builds on earlier depictions of the trials of this saint, though it is far more bizarre.
- A. The exterior shows Christ's arrest and Christ carrying the cross, stories that establish his trials to save humankind. The trials of Saint Anthony are in imitation of Christ, the path recommended by Modern Devotion.
 - B. Three scenes are depicted across the landscape background of the interior. On the left, we see Saint Anthony after a bout with demons as friends carry him back to his hermit's retreat; above, in an earlier moment, Anthony is carried aloft by demons. On the right, other demons tempt him by the sins of lust and gluttony. In the central panel, Saint Anthony, still beset by demons, prays to the Lord.
 - C. Each of these scenes teems with the monster-demons that only Bosch could dream up, at least with so many variations. In this case, they are reminders of the hallucinations suffered by people sick with ergotism.
 - D. In the central panel, a woman offers a dish to a nun and to a man without a torso. It has been suggested that this dish contains the "holy vintage," a medicine strained over bits of Saint Anthony's bones that was given to the worst victims of ergotism. This suggests a likely commission for an Antonite hospital or monastery.
 - E. Furnaces used to distill such treatments are seen throughout the panel. Bosch had married into a family of pharmacists and so would be familiar with such equipment.

VI. Bosch's *Adoration of the Magi Triptych* represents another popular subject at the turn of the 16th century. The bell-shaped curve at the top of the altarpiece would become standard for 16th-century triptychs in the Netherlands.

- A. The exterior scene of *The Mass of Saint Gregory* shows the 6th-century pope, who, when confronted by a lay member's disbelief in the reality of transubstantiation, prayed to God to convince the doubter of its truth.
 1. When the priest states that the bread and wine are the body and blood of Christ, a vision of the eternally suffering Christ appears at the altar, denoting the reality of the Eucharist.
 2. Scenes from the Passion of Christ are shown behind his half-length figure, with the Crucifixion placed at the apex of the sculptural group.
- B. The interior of the altarpiece shows the *Adoration of the Magi*. Mary holds the Christ Child while the Magi bring gifts symbolizing his fate.
 1. The side panels display donors Peter Bronckhorst and Agnes Bosschuysen, fellow members of the Confraternity of Our Lady, and their patron saints, Peter and Agnes.
 2. Nothing here is revolutionary for the year 1500, yet Bosch's conception of the scene is unfamiliar. The Adoration was often shown as a solemn affair, but here, the mood is uneasy; strange figures peer at the kings and the Holy Family, and armies clash in the background.
 3. The shepherds behind and on top of the stable appear less awestruck than sinister. The seminude man in front wearing a metal crown of thorns has been identified as King Herod or the Antichrist.
 4. Art historian Laurinda Dixon has suggested that this altarpiece has alchemical symbolism: The six figures in the hut represent the six base metals that will be transmuted into higher forms through a process begun by the birth of Christ. Alchemy was a respectable, even spiritual, activity in the 16th century.

VII. *Christ Crowned with Thorns* depicts the Man of Sorrows, whose resigned acceptance of his fate was viewed as a model for other humans in Modern Devotion.

- A. The four men who torment Christ may represent the four humors, which had been out of balance since the arrival of sin in the world. The angry man at upper left stands for the choleric temperament, while the sanguine man at upper right smiles and places a hand on Christ's shoulder. The phlegmatic man at lower left is ruled by the Moon and wears a crescent on his headdress. The melancholic man, ruled by the Earth, is at lower right. All are out of balance because of sin and, thus, add to Christ's torment.

- B. Each man is shown as a caricature. In the 16th century, artists used physiognomy in these caricatural forms to show how sin could twist humans.
- C. Bosch painted several variations on this theme. Each suggests a pessimistic view of human nature that was perhaps more pointed in Bosch's art but not at all uncommon for his time.

Works Discussed:

Hieronymus Bosch: *The Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things*, c. 1480s, oil on panel, 3'11¼" x 4'11", Museo del Prado, Madrid.

The Death of the Miser, c. 1500, oil on panel, 3½" x 1'11", Samuel H. Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Saint John the Baptist, c. 1470, oil on panel, 1'7" x 1'3¼", Museo Lazaro Galdiano, Madrid.

St. Anthony Triptych (open), c.1495, oil on panel, 4'3¾" x 7'10½", National Museum of Ancient Art, Lisbon.

Christ on the Road to Calvary (exterior of the *Temptation of St. Anthony Triptych*), c.1495, oil on panel, each panel: 4'3¾" x 3'11", National Museum of Ancient Art, Lisbon.

The Adoration of the Magi Triptych (interior), c.1500, oil on panel, 4'6¼" x 4'8½", Museo del Prado, Madrid.

The Adoration of the Magi Triptych (exterior), c.1500, oil on panel, 4'6¼" x 2'4¼", Museo del Prado, Madrid.

Christ Crowned with Thorns (also called *The Mocking of Christ*), c. 1479, oil on panel, 2'5" x 1'11", National Gallery, London.

Essential Reading:

Snyder, *Northern Renaissance Art*, chapter 16.

Supplementary Reading:

Dixon, *Bosch*.

Gibson, *Bosch*.

Koldeweij et al., *Hieronymus Bosch: The Complete Paintings and Drawings*.

Marijnissen and Ruysffelaere, *Hieronymus Bosch: The Complete Works*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Is the *Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* a secular or sacred work? Do these distinctions work for Bosch's art?
2. What do hermit saints represent in Bosch's art?

Lecture Twenty-Seven

Two Bosch Triptychs

Scope: No Netherlandish artist since Jan van Eyck so clearly merits a detailed investigation of his themes and imagery as Hieronymus Bosch. At the same time, no other Netherlandish artist better calls into question too rigid a definition of Netherlandish art as naturalistic. Two triptychs, the *Haywain Triptych* and the *Garden of Earthly Delights*, show how Bosch adapted this traditional format to fulfill his own vision of religious art. Although many aspects of Bosch's art remain enigmatic, research into the contemporary meaning of details in these triptychs provides an understanding of how Bosch, his patrons, and other audiences might have interpreted his visual messages.

Outline

- I. In this lecture, we look at two Bosch triptychs, the *Haywain Triptych* and the *Garden of Earthly Delights*, to see how the artist adapted this traditional format to fulfill his own vision of religious art.
 - A. Many aspects of Bosch's art remain enigmatic, but research into the contemporary meaning of details in these triptychs helps us understand how Bosch and his audiences might have interpreted his messages.
 - B. An early-17th-century Spanish cleric, Fra José de Sigüenza, described three thematic categories of Bosch's art: the life of Christ, especially the Passion; hermit saints; and *macaronic*, an Italian literary term meaning an esoteric mixed genre.
- II. Sigüenza described the *Haywain Triptych* as macaronic. Despite its form, it was not meant to serve as an altarpiece but as a private moralizing painting.
 - A. The exterior shows a solitary man on a journey—Everyman, a familiar figure from literature of the time. An impoverished soul, he is confronted by dangers at every turn, yet he turns from licentiousness, represented by the dancing couple and the bagpipe player.
 - B. Is Everyman a positive or negative figure? Is his poverty voluntary or involuntary? With his path unimpeded, he more likely represents voluntary poverty, an imitation of Christ, who stands for every soul's harrowing journey through life.
 - C. The busy, colorful interior is a Last Judgment scene, modernized in imagery but not in its ultimate message.
 - D. In Last Judgment scenes, the left panel typically shows the souls of the blessed entering heaven. Instead, Bosch shows the Garden of Eden, suggesting that humans had once enjoyed life in paradise but chose to allow sin to guide their lives.

- 1. A comparison is made with the fall of the rebel angels from heaven, seen with God the Father at the top of the panel.
 - 2. This is when sin entered the world. Satan takes the form of a half-serpent, half-female figure.
 - E. The center panel of a Last Judgment painting usually depicts Christ as judge. Christ here is a tiny figure, the Man of Sorrows at the top center.
 - 1. The hay wagon (haywain) may represent the saying "All the world is a haystack and each man plucks from it what he can."
 - 2. The group atop the wagon indulges in music and lovemaking; one of the musicians is a little demon. All ignore the angel.
 - 3. On the ground, the grasping for hay grows fierce. Behind the wagon, a group that includes a king, a pope, and an emperor follows the wagon. In the foreground, vignettes reveal the dangers of making hay the pursuit of life.
 - F. The wagon leads to the right panel, where Bosch stayed with convention and placed his scene of hell. He characterized hell as a series of buildings and a huge furnace run on the souls of the damned—the end product of pursuing hay, or the sin of avarice.
 - G. Most striking compared with other Last Judgment paintings is this painting's lack of balance. Good seems so small and sin so dominant. Bosch was not alone in this evaluation.
 - 1. Sebastian Brant's *Ship of Fools*, first published in 1494, catalogued 113 different kinds of foolish behavior in verse.
 - 2. Desiderius Erasmus gathered examples of foolishness for *In Praise of Folly*, published in 1511. According to Erasmus, folly was the natural state of humans since the Fall and, thus, "deserved" praise.
 - 3. These books and Bosch's painting humorously critiqued society. Each person's journey through life saw the occasion for sin.
- III. The *Garden of Earthly Delights* is similar in theme to the *Haywain Triptych* but broader in scope. In depicting the creation of the world and the story of humanity, this triptych goes further than any other Bosch painting in its fantastic vision of the world.
 - A. Scholars have differed widely in their interpretations of this triptych. Cultural clues make certain possibilities more likely than others.
 - B. The painting may have been done for Count Hendrick III of Nassau-Breda, a Netherlandish nobleman, or for his uncle, Engelbert II, a military governor. Both were members of the Confraternity of Our Lady of 's Hertogenbosch. The work was in Hendrick's palace in 1517.
 - C. The exterior panels depict in grisaille a vision of the world on the third day of creation. A tiny image of God the Father blesses the scene at upper left. Two Latin inscriptions read, "For he spoke, and it was" and "By his command, they were created." The new world is a watery but verdant place that seems to be enclosed in a transparent sphere.

- D. The triptych recalls the composition of the *Haywain Triptych*. The Garden of Eden is on the left, a scene of hell on the right, and vignettes of nude people, buildings, plants, and hybrid forms in the center.
- E. On the left panel, God—depicted as Christ—is shown marrying Adam and Eve. The lush setting is the Garden of Eden, but all is not innocent. Strange creatures crawl about, and several animals attack others.
- F. The central panel is astonishing and difficult to interpret. Youthful nude men and women kiss, frolic, converse, and eat. Some of them are enclosed in bubbles. Some seem to sprout fruit from various body parts. Curiously, their engagement in sensual pleasures is relatively restrained.
- G. The right panel is the dark counterpart to the light scenes. As infernal fires rage, the damned experience torments. The imagery is surrealistic.
 - 1. In a drawing related to the “tree man” motif in the *Garden*, a man with tree-trunk legs that stand in boats is placed in a landscape with animals. From his open shell of a body, men and women drink.
 - 2. In this context, the tree man may suggest sinfulness as hollowness. The crescent-moon flag, associated with Islam, indicates un-Christian behavior that pollutes an otherwise positive environment.
- H. The amazing products of Bosch’s imagination could be interpreted through modern psychology, but the triptych is not a modern painting. Given the strong moralizing messages of Bosch’s art and the religious context of this triptych, we need to keep looking for meaning.
 - 1. One theory held that Bosch made this painting for the Adamites, a heretical group advocating sexual license to regain lost innocence. But the imagery of the interior argues against this theory. Also, the possession of the painting by Philip II, an orthodox Roman Catholic, makes this theory unlikely.
 - 2. Is the imagery of the central panel positive or negative? This is the most intractable question of all. Is this a true garden of delights—what could have been if not for the Fall?
 - 3. Some scholars see the position of this scene, between Eden and hell, as indicating where this activity will lead. Here, the garden is a false paradise, where sensuality is pursued for its own sake.
 - 4. Yet another interpretation sees the panel as representing the lost golden age of humanity from Adam to the time of Noah, when humans were all but wiped out because of their indulgence in sin.
 - 5. Another intriguing interpretation relates to alchemy, which involved the quest to change “base” materials into higher ones.
 - a. Alchemists included many faithful Christians. Alchemy could be understood as a spiritual pursuit for the development of humanity itself.

- b. Alchemy was about transformation. In alchemical literature, transmutation could be symbolized by hybrid forms, part human, part animal or plant, similar to those seen in the *Garden of Earthly Delights*.

- I. Whatever its meaning, the painting was popular among Bosch’s contemporaries. Several copies of the central panel were made, and tapestries reproducing it were woven. This is telling evidence that the painting was not regarded as openly heretical or amoral.

Works Discussed:

Hieronymus Bosch: *The Haywain Triptych* (open), c. 1510, oil on panel, 4'5" x 6'7", Museo del Prado, Madrid.

The Haywain Triptych (panels closed showing *Everyman Walking the Path of Life*), c. 1510, oil on panel, 4'5" x 3'3½", Museo del Prado, Madrid.

Garden of Earthly Delights, left wing: *Paradise (Garden of Eden)*, central panel: *Garden of Earthly Delights*, right wing: *Hell (Inferno)*, 1503–04, oil on panel; central panel: 7'2½" x 6'4¾", wings: 7'2½" x 3'2¼", Museo del Prado, Madrid.

Garden of Earthly Delights (closed), 1503–04, oil on panel, 7'2 ½" x 6'4¾", Museo del Prado, Madrid.

Tree Man, c. 1505, pen and brown ink on paper, 11 x 8¼", Albertina, Vienna.

Essential Reading:

Snyder, *Northern Renaissance Art*, chapter 16.

Supplementary Reading:

Belting, *Hieronymus Bosch: Garden of Earthly Delights*.

Dixon, *Bosch*.

Gibson, *Bosch*.

Koldeweij et al., *Hieronymus Bosch: The Complete Paintings and Drawings*.

Marijnissen and Ruyffelaere, *Hieronymus Bosch: The Complete Works*.

Questions to Consider:

- 1. Would Bosch have been able to develop such an idiosyncratic style if he had been more dependent on painting for his livelihood?
- 2. We often allow for multiple meanings of modern artworks. Is it reasonable to assume this for the early 16th century, as well?

Lecture Twenty-Eight

Lucas van Leyden

Scope: Lucas van Leyden (c. 1488/94–1533) was one of the first 16th-century artists to work exclusively in his native region, in this case, the town of Leyden in the northern Netherlands. Stimulated in part by Albrecht Dürer's art, Van Leyden was a master engraver, as well as a woodcut designer and painter. Best known for his moralizing scenes of daily life, this artist also depicted historical and religious scenes. His paintings emphasized dramatic, multifigured events more than his prints, which often presented conversations rather than physical action. By his later career, the influence of Italian Renaissance art was clear in his portrayal of heroic nudes. Van Leyden also turned repeatedly to the popular power-of-women theme.

Outline

- I. Lucas van Leyden, one of the first 16th-century artists to work exclusively in his native region, spent his career in the town of Leyden in the northern Netherlands. His fame spread beyond his hometown through the dissemination of nearly 200 engravings and woodcuts.
 - A. Trained by his father and another artist, Van Leyden entered the painter's guild in 1514. His first dated prints are from 1508.
 - B. Like Albrecht Dürer, Van Leyden signed and dated most of his engravings. His woodcuts are less often dated.
 - C. He "married up" to Lysbeth van Boshuysen between 1526 and 1528. His membership in two civic militia companies also speaks to his status.
 - D. Van Leyden went to Antwerp during Dürer's time there. Dürer was his model and, in turn, seems to have admired Van Leyden's work.
- II. One of Van Leyden's early engravings, *The Temptation of Saint Anthony*, shows a familiar subject, interpreted in a novel way.
 - A. The hermit saint's reading is interrupted by a comely young woman, who stands before him holding a jar in one hand and a sash in the other. Saint Anthony raises his hand in a gesture of speaking and rejection.
 - B. The woman who tempts Anthony is a demon, identified by the horns on her headdress. Van Leyden focused on one story of Saint Anthony's trials, that of his temptation by a female demon.
 - C. The narrative is accessible to viewers as a moral dilemma rather than a fantastic experience. The reserved mood would become typical of Van Leyden's art, which often concentrated on the interactions of two or three figures.
- III. The realm of prints often saw thematic innovations before they appeared in oil paint. A good example is the engraving *The Milkmaid*.
 - A. In this print, a cowherd stands while a milkmaid carries her heavy pail and a hat. Cattle stand in profile, filling the print from left to right. A bull seems to look directly at us. A third animal at right is cut off—a radical approach to "framing" a subject at the time.
 - B. Though secular, the print is not without moral meaning. Its interpretation as an allegory of lust and free will is consistent with 16th-century Dutch, in which *melkan* ("to milk") could also mean "to lure."
 - C. Perhaps the bull's gaze is meant to engage us with the subject directly, asking us what we would do. It is typical of Van Leyden to leave room for viewers' own reactions without insisting on a single response.
 - D. Van Leyden worked his engraved plates fully but sketchily, with greater freedom of line than in Dürer's work.
- IV. The *Ecce Homo* (*Behold the Man*) presents a contrast in subject, expression, and scale. This large engraving shows a story from the Passion of Christ.
 - A. Pontius Pilate presents Jesus to the assembled crowd, who call for his crucifixion. This subject, found in previous print series, was becoming popular as an independent theme in painting. The horizontal "landscape format" was common in Netherlandish art.
 - B. Van Leyden's novel interpretation shows Christ and Pilate as small figures in the middle distance. The crowd dominates the foreground.
 - C. The architecture on the left side and in the background would have been familiar to contemporaries. The town square is more or less Leyden's.
 - D. These contemporary references suggest the Modern Devotion idea that all humans were indicted in Christ's Passion and Crucifixion. Van Leyden wanted viewers to think of their own role in the Christian drama.
 - E. Van Leyden's religious and moralizing prints often emphasize the spectatorship of viewers as part of a meditation on moral choice, a theme that would become popular with many artists a few years later under the influence of the Protestant Reformation.

- V. The choice between good and evil lies at the heart of the woodcut design *Tavern Scene*.
- A. A well-dressed man sits at a table, enjoying the caresses of an attractive young woman. An old woman drinks from a cup, while a boy waits in a doorway and another figure stands at an open window.
 - B. This scene of pleasure has dark overtones. The young woman is stealing the man's purse as she distracts him. A banderole next to the figure at the window states a Dutch proverb that translates as, "Beware which way the wind blows." The old woman stealthily passes money to another accomplice, the boy at the door.
 - C. The well-dressed man has often been identified as the Prodigal Son from the parable told by Christ, as related in Luke 15. This parable is about the mercy of God, who forgives the penitent sinner.
 - D. The Prodigal Son became a popular topic in 16th-century print series. Is this print an early example of one moment from the story or a scene of daily life with moralizing intent? In either case, the essential meaning remains the same: There is danger in licentiousness.
 - E. The woodcut does not carry Van Leyden's monogram, but the style is similar to others designed by him.
- VI. An important theme in Van Leyden's prints is the dangers women pose to men through sexual temptation. An upsurge in misogyny, or at least fear of women, in Europe in the first part of the 16th century has been associated with the religious and social upheaval of the time.
- A. Some Protestant thinkers had harsh attitudes toward women. For Roman Catholics, veneration of the Virgin Mary helped ameliorate such feelings.
 - B. Artworks by Van Leyden and others conveyed this anxiety about women's roles. In this *power-of-women* theme, the power could be negative or positive. Even when positive, there was uneasiness about women wielding power.
 - C. The woodcut *Aristotle Ridden by Phyllis* shows the Greek philosopher Aristotle, who supposedly became enamored of Phyllis, mistress of Alexander the Great. Phyllis insisted that Aristotle serve as her "steed" if he desired her attentions. This humiliation indicated that even the wisest man could be a "fool for love."
 - D. The engraving *Lot and His Daughters* also has overtones of uneasiness about the sexuality of women leading to the downfall of men.
 1. In the Old Testament story, Lot and his daughters have fled Sodom before its destruction by God. The daughters believed that no other men had survived and that to perpetuate their line, they must become pregnant by their father.

2. The daughters encouraged their father to drink to excess, then "lay with him." Both became pregnant and gave birth to sons who would lead two tribes.
3. Lot is curiously passive in the story, but Van Leyden shows him as an engaged participant. Nonetheless, the two daughters led their father to a terrible act through his weakness for sex and alcohol.
4. Van Leyden's figures are larger and more idealized than in previous works, reflecting the influence of Italian Renaissance art. The nudes have an almost sculptural quality, but the print lacks the light delicacy of earlier engravings.

VII. The theme of personal moral choices is again seen in *Young Man with a Skull* in a collection of Van Leyden's printed work.

- A. An extravagantly dressed young man looks pensively to the right while holding a human skull. The message is clear: Youth will fade, wealth can drop away, but death is certain.
- B. A visual counterpart is found in representations of Saint Jerome. Van Leyden likely made his more secularized print close in time to Dürer's painting of Saint Jerome pointing to a skull.
- C. The fineness of the engraving technique accentuates the print's meaning by making the costume and hair seem real. The fine parallel lines for shading help create the melancholic mood.

VIII. Though best known as a printmaker, Van Leyden was a painter, too.

About 15 surviving paintings can be attributed to him, including *Dance Around the Golden Calf*.

- A. This work is a fine example of Van Leyden's religious paintings, in which he often depicted stories with small but precise, colorful figures set in extensive landscapes.
- B. The Old Testament story describes Moses' discovery of the Israelites worshipping the golden calf after he received the Ten Commandments. This action broke faith with their agreement to worship one God.
- C. Much of the foreground of the central panel shows the dissolute behavior of the Israelites dancing around the golden calf. In the background, Moses prepares to throw the tablets to the ground in fury.
- D. Though relatively staid compared to Bosch's works, this painting treats the same issue: Each human has to choose the path of righteousness or sin. Van Leyden's choice of this story was original, as it was not then established as a subject for history paintings.
- E. At a time when religious paintings were under attack, this one could be defended as a historical and moralizing narrative that does not try to substitute an image of God for God's self.

Works Discussed:

Lucas van Leyden: *The Temptation of St. Anthony*, 1509, engraving, 7¼ x 5¾", Musée du Louvre, Paris.

The Milkmaid, 1510, engraving, 4 ½ x 6 ¼", British Museum, London.

Ecce Homo, 1510, engraving, 11¼" x 15¾", © Whitworth Art Gallery, The University of Manchester, Manchester.

Tavern Scene (The Prodigal Son), 1518–20, woodcut, 2'2¼" x 1'7", Cabinet des Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris.

Aristotle Ridden by Phyllis, c. 1513, colored woodcut, 1'4" x 11½", Cabinet des Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris.

Lot and his Daughters, 1530, engraving, 7½ x 9¾", © The Trustees of the British Museum, London.

Young Man with a Skull, c. 1519, copper plate engraving, 7¼ x 5¾", Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main.

Dance around the Golden Calf (Moses and his Worship of the Golden Calf), c. 1529, oil on panel, 3½" x 2'2½" x 2'11¾", © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

Essential Reading:

Snyder, *Northern Renaissance Art*, pp. 420–431.

Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, pp. 316–319, 332–333.

Supplementary Reading:

Jacobowitz and Stepanek, *The Prints of Lucas van Leyden and His Contemporaries*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What qualities of Lucas van Leyden's prints might be attributed to his Netherlandish heritage?
2. Was Van Leyden a Reformation artist? Why or why not?

Lecture Twenty-Nine Patinir, Massys, and Van Cleve

Scope: Antwerp rose to artistic prominence in the southern Netherlands after 1500, reflecting its replacement of Bruges as a major commercial center. The city's increasing wealth drew artists to a new art market, prompting them to adapt in various ways.

Joachim Patinir (c. 1480–1524) painted traditional subjects in modern ways. His paintings were the basis for a new subject, the independent landscape painting, in which a dominant landscape helped establish meaning and mood. Patinir worked with other Antwerp artists, who painted the figures in some of his paintings. One of his collaborators, Quinten Massys (c. 1466–1530), was the most successful painter in Antwerp during the first decades of its dominance of the art world. He drew inspiration from his Netherlandish predecessors but proved to be an innovator. His transition from altarpieces to portraits and other works likely reflected the influence of the Protestant Reformation. Joos van Cleve (c. ?–1540/41) was more of an adapter than an innovator. He also understood the changing art market and catered to it by combining traditional Netherlandish symbolism with the elaborate details demanded by modern taste.

Outline

- I. Antwerp rose to prominence as the center for painting in early-16th century Netherlands as Bruges began to fade. The change reflected larger economic realities.
 - A. Maximilian had punished the Bruges rebellion by ordering its foreign merchants to Antwerp in the 1480s. This order was later rescinded, but many merchants remained in Antwerp.
 - B. The silting up of the Zwin, which had allowed access to Bruges's port, was an environmental blow. As a result, Antwerp became a major center for production.
 - C. As trade expanded in Europe, with links to the New World, Antwerp benefited from its geographic location and from its role as a major city in the powerful Holy Roman Empire of Charles V.
 - D. Charles became ruler of his Netherlandish inheritance in 1515 and king of Spain in 1516. When he was proclaimed Holy Roman Emperor after his father, Maximilian, died, a wide swath of often fractious Europe came under his authority. We see a portrait of Charles by the Netherlandish court painter Bernaert van Orley.

II. The career of Joachim Patinir helps us understand the new role of Antwerp.

- A. Little is known about Patinir's life or training. He became a master in the Guild of Saint Luke in 1515, married twice, and appears to have been relatively prosperous.
- B. Albrecht Dürer, whom Patinir met in Antwerp in 1521, referred to him as "the good landscape painter." Patinir's 20 surviving paintings were the basis for a new subject, the independent landscape painting.
- C. Patinir's paintings included narrative and figures; however, his landscapes played a primary role in establishing meaning and mood.
- D. The exterior of *The Penitence of Saint Jerome Triptych* shows the Virgin and Child with Saint Anne and Saint Sebald, patron saint of Nuremberg. These subjects were more popular in Germany than in the Low Countries, suggesting German patronage.
 - 1. On the interior, from left to right, are the *Baptism of Christ*, *Penitent Saint Jerome*, and *Saint Anthony Abbot*. Each scene features a hermit.
 - 2. The center panel shows elements of Saint Jerome's life and the monastery he founded. The left panel shows Saint John the Baptist preaching. The right panel shows bizarre figures gathered around Saint Anthony, indicating an awareness of Bosch's art.
 - 3. The landscape is continuous across all three panels, uniting the scenes despite their real separation in space and time. The viewpoint is high but inconsistent.
 - 4. The color scheme of brown, green, and blue to suggest spatial recession would become a formula for 16th-century landscapes.
- E. The *Landscape with Charon and a Man's Soul* contrasts two worlds through the metaphor of landscape.
 - 1. On the left is a beautiful landscape through which angels and humans stroll. A strange transparent building, resembling those in Bosch's art, is in the background.
 - 2. On the right is a hellish realm, where fires rage and the rocky landscape falls into gloomy darkness. The three-headed dog Cerberus waits by the gate. Tiny figures experience Boschian torments.
 - 3. Charon ferries a soul across the river Styx, which flows between the two sides of the painting.
 - 4. Patinir's painting is the first of this subject in northern Europe, yet like other 16th-century works, it stresses the role of moral choice.
- F. *Landscape with the Temptation of Saint Anthony* depicts the temptation of the hermit saint, set against a panoramic landscape that contrasts rocky areas with plains covered with water, trees, and villages.
 - 1. The saint's torment here is sexual temptation, though a monkey-like demon pulls on his clothing, too.

- 2. A 1574 inventory lists the painting as a collaboration between Patinir for the landscape and "Master Quentin" (Quinten Massys) for the figures. Only Patinir signed the painting, but the figures are different enough from his typical ones and so close to Massys's that joint authorship is probable.

III. Quinten Massys was a flexible painter who could move from subject to subject with ease. He could look back 100 years for inspiration and still prove to be an innovator.

- A. The son of a blacksmith in Leuven, Massys became the most successful painter in Antwerp during the first decades of its dominance in the art world. He married twice. Two of his 13 children became painters.
- B. Massys painted altarpieces in the first two decades of his career. Later, he mainly painted private devotional works, portraits, and secular scenes, reflecting the changing art market after the Protestant Reformation.
- C. The *Lamentation Altarpiece*, painted for the chapel of the carpenter's guild in Antwerp Cathedral, rivals in scale the largest altarpieces of the 15th century. The composition of its central panel can be traced to works by Petrus Christus and Rogier van der Weyden.
 - 1. Like other artists, Massys referenced earlier Netherlandish art (a technique termed *archaism*), but his faces, gestures, and color scheme were different than Rogier's.
 - 2. The altarpiece was dedicated to Saints John the Baptist and John the Evangelist. The wings show *Salome before Herod* on the left and the *Martyrdom of Saint John the Evangelist* on the right.
 - 3. Massys's contemporary style is shown through spatial organization and modish dress on the left and the nearly caricatural figures on the right.
- D. *The Moneychanger and His Wife* also reflects Massys's archaism. The objects in the room, the details of dress, and the convex mirror are reminders of Christus's *Goldsmith in His Shop*, *Possibly Saint Eligius*.
 - 1. A lost work by Jan van Eyck of two men going over accounts may be the source for both paintings. The woman's dress here is nearly identical to Margaret van Eyck's in her 1439 portrait.
 - 2. Massys's work is an uneasy religious-secular combination. The man focuses all his attention on weighing coins. Does that mean he strives to be just or that he neglects the spiritual realm for that of commerce? His wife holds a book of hours but looks at the coins.
 - 3. What role does the convex mirror play? What relationship does the reflection of an older man reading and a city view with a church spire have to the whole? Is this a depiction of righteous work or a warning about the dangers of pursuing wealth?
- E. Portraiture played a greater role in Massys's work as the years

progressed. *Portrait of a Woman* shows links to 15th-century traditions, as well as innovative elements.

1. This portrait of an unknown sitter was part of a diptych, now separated. The dark background harks back to early portrait traditions.
2. The woman holds a book of hours, but her head is turned away and slightly tilted. This pose and the strong lighting suggest a temporary state, different from the static poses of 15th-century portraiture. The illusion of three dimensions is much stronger than in any 15th-century Netherlandish portrait.
3. Although the woman is shown as both pious and wealthy, she is not in a pose of prayer. Piety is not her only attribute.

F. *The Virgin and Child Enthroned* combines Netherlandish and Italian elements.

1. The elaborate throne, the monumental forms of the Virgin and Child, the complex pose of the infant Jesus, and the type of Virgin Mary are Italianate.
2. The precise and linear depiction of forms, including the landscape background, and the still life and other accessories have clear precedents in Netherlandish art. Do the objects carry symbolic weight, or is the primary meaning the beauty of the painting and the relationship it shows?

IV. Another Patinir collaborator, Joos van Cleve, was more of an adaptor than an innovator, yet he understood the changing art market and was successful in meeting new needs.

- A. Van Cleve was from the region of Cleve in Germany. His birth date is unknown. He trained with Jan Joest, active in Kalkar.
- B. By 1511, he was in Antwerp and became a master in the Saint Luke's Guild.
- C. Van Cleve quickly adapted to the Antwerp market, looking to revered Netherlandish predecessors while catering to modern tastes. He collaborated with Patinir and even took over compositions from the Patinir workshop.
- D. The enormously popular *Adoration of the Magi* answered a taste for elaborate, detailed compositions, with a lavish display of fabrics, colored marble, and metalwork.
 1. The three Magi, dressed in brocades, velvet, and fur and adorned with jewelry, come before the Virgin and Child. Onlookers gather while details of the Magi's journey are seen in the background.
 2. The rich, deep color is reminiscent of earlier Netherlandish paintings, as are the lovingly described accessories. Yet the greater diversity of figure types, complex drapery folds, Italianate architecture, and overabundance of decoration clearly place this

work in the realm of the 16th century.

E. Van Cleve's *Lucretia* was also popular. Lucretia was a virtuous married woman in ancient Rome who committed suicide after being raped. Many Renaissance depictions of her, including this one, present her as highly eroticized.

1. Many artists ignored the political meaning of Lucretia's story and focused instead on her attractiveness and lurid death.
2. The choice of this subject may reflect Van Cleve's travels during his later career. He apparently worked in France at the court of Francis I in the 1530s and likely also traveled to Italy.

F. Van Cleve made few religious paintings in the 1530s. *Madonna and Child with a Carnation* may have been his last painting of the subject of the Virgin and Child.

1. The Christ Child rests on a pillow on the Virgin's lap. She steadies him as she holds a carnation. Jesus' twisted pose suggests that he is pulling away from the flower, a symbol of the Passion.
2. This Italianate depiction shows the *sfumato* ("smokiness") of the figures' faces and contours and a pyramidal composition.

Works Discussed:

Joachim Patinir: *The Penitence of St. Jerome Triptych*, c. 1518, oil on panel, shaped top, central panel, overall, with engaged frame: 3'10¼" x 2'8"; each wing, overall, with engaged frame: 3'11½" x 1'2"; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

The Penitence of St. Jerome Triptych (exterior), c. 1518, oil on panel, shaped top, central panel, overall, with engaged frame: 3'10¼" x 2'8"; each wing, overall, with engaged frame: 3'11½" x 1'2"; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Landscape with Charon and a Man's Soul, 1515–24, oil on panel, 2'1¼" x 3'4½", Museo del Prado, Madrid.

Landscape with the Temptation of Saint Anthony, c. 1520–24, oil on panel, 5'1" x 5'8" Museo del Prado, Madrid.

Quinten Massys: *Lamentation Altarpiece*, 1508–11, oil on panel, central panel: 8' 6 ½" x 8' 7 ½", each wing: 8'6½" x 3'11¼", Koninklijk Musea voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp.

The Moneychanger and His Wife, 1514, oil on panel, 2'3¾" x 2'2½", Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Portrait of a Woman, c. 1520, oil on panel, 1'7" x 1'5", The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

The Virgin and Child Enthroned, c. 1525, oil on oak panel, 4'5" x 3'11½", Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin.

Joos van Cleve: *Adoration of the Magi*, c. 1517–18, oil on panel, 3'7¼" x 2'3¾", Alte Meister, Dresden.

Lucretia, c. 1520, oil on panel, 2'6" x 1'9 1/3", Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

Madonna and Child with a Carnation, c. 1535, oil on panel, 2' 1/8" x 1'6¼", The Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri, Purchase: Nelson Trust, 33-50. Photograph by Jamison Miller.

Essential Reading:

Snyder, *Northern Renaissance Art*, chapter 18.

Supplementary Reading:

Falkenburg, *Joachim Patinir: Landscape as an Image of the Pilgrimage of Life*.

Gibson, *Mirror of the Earth: The World Landscape in Sixteenth-Century Flemish Painting*.

Hand, *Joos van Cleve: The Complete Paintings*.

Silver, *The Paintings of Quinten Massys*.

_____, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes: The Rise of Pictorial Genres in the Antwerp Art Market*.

Van der Stock et al., *Antwerp: Story of a Metropolis, 16th–17th Century*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Is Quinten Massys's painting *Money Changer and His Wife* a positive or negative image?
2. Do you think that specialization led to collaboration—or that collaboration led to specialization?

Lecture Thirty

The Rise of Antwerp

Scope: Antwerp in the 16th century witnessed significant changes in the production and sale of art. Independent masters collaborated, each lending his specialty to a painting. Large workshops led by now-anonymous masters produced a steady supply of ready-made paintings of popular subjects. The explosion of international trade and population in Antwerp after 1500 enlarged the pool of art buyers. The city pioneered the beginnings of a truly open art market. The success of twice-yearly fairs that sold artworks for export and for local patrons led to the establishment of a permanent painting sales center in the city-run Bourse building and to a new kind of professional, the art dealer. The 300 or so artists in Antwerp in the mid-16th century concentrated on popular subjects. Jan Sanders van Hemessen (active 1519–56) painted moralizing subjects derived from biblical stories. A self-portrait by his daughter, Catarina (1528–after 1587), was the first to show the painter working at an easel. Pieter Aertsen (1507/8–75) introduced large-scale peasant and market scenes with moralizing meanings.

Outline

- I. Sixteenth-century Antwerp pioneered significant changes in the production and sale of paintings. The first change was the collaboration between masters on the same work. One example is the *Temptation of Saint Anthony* by Joachim Patinir and Quinten Massys
 - A. These independent masters chose to work together, combining Patinir's expertise in landscapes with Massys's in figures. This relationship was different from a master assigning work to journeymen or apprentices in his studio. This tradition of collaboration in Antwerp lasted well into the 17th century.
 - B. The *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* is likely a product of collaboration between Patinir and Joos van Cleve. Van Cleve's figures are larger, fuller, and more carefully painted than those in another version of the same subject painted by Patinir alone.
 - C. Evidence suggests that contemporaries were aware of such collaborations. These paintings were likely more expensive than those made individually by the same artists.
- II. In the 15th century, some shops sold ready-made paintings "as is" or to be customized. In 16th-century Antwerp, the beginnings of a truly open art market emerged.

- A. As in other parts of Europe, all kinds of goods were sold at twice-yearly fairs on cathedral grounds. Among the luxury goods sold were paintings and prints.
 - B. Trade exploded in Antwerp after 1500. The population jumped from about 40,000 in 1500 to more than 100,000 in 1560. The influx of wealthy merchants and bankers increased the pool of art buyers.
 - C. These buyers bought works both for themselves and for export to the New World and other cities in Europe. This market represented the first early modern economy based on capitalist principles.
 - D. With increased demand came increased supply. Antwerp had more liberal regulations than Bruges about guild entry and sales by foreign artists. Painters and printmakers from around western Europe came to work there.
- III. There were many commissioned works of art, but the greatest boom came in “ready-made” works, which affected production and sales.
- A. Now-anonymous masters established large workshops to serve the needs of the ready-made market. Production was often rigidly organized, based on the use of pattern drawings and detailed underdrawings that journeymen could follow.
 - B. Two paintings of the *Adoration of the Christ Child* from the 1620s are examples. One is attributed to the Master of Frankfurt; the other, to a follower of Jan Joest of Kalkar.
 - C. Attributing such paintings to one master is misleading. A master typically served as the workshop’s entrepreneur, setting the style and choosing the subject matter but likely painting little himself.
- IV. Where did this open market occur in Antwerp? For the first time in Europe, we find a dedicated space for the sale of artworks: Our Lady’s Pand, the biannual fair at the Church of Our Lady, begun in 1460.
- A. Major artists did not sell at the Pand, but it increased opportunities for buying and selling art.
 - B. In 1540, painters moved to a new space open year-round at the Schilderspand in the city-run Bourse building, the first international center for finance and commodity sales. We see an engraving of the building by Pieter van der Borcht.
 - C. The number of artists in Antwerp expanded rapidly in the first half of the 16th century. About 300 painters, engravers, and sculptors were registered in their guilds in 1560.
 - D. Many painters specialized in one or two popular subjects: the Virgin and Child, the Rest on the Flight into Egypt, and the Adoration of the Magi. Newer subjects, such as landscapes and secular themes, were also painted frequently.
 - E. The only artists who suffered a loss of patronage were sculptors who carved altarpieces. Their clientele in Germany and Scandinavia fell off between 1530 and 1560 with the Reformation and strictures about church decorations.
 - F. We also find the beginnings of a new profession, the art dealer. Painters had always sold their own works, but guild restrictions limited sales of others’ works. By the mid-16th century, a few “art sellers” were registered in the Saint Luke’s guild in Antwerp.
 - G. The results of these changes were increased production, concentration on a few popular subjects, and a wider range of prices, which allowed more buyers.
- V. The paintings of Jan Sanders van Hemessen and Pieter Aertsen show the effects of this evolving art market on artists.
- A. Van Hemessen was from the village of Hemessen near Antwerp. He trained with Hendrik van Cleve and may have worked at a Hapsburg court before going to Italy in the early 1520s.
 - B. Van Hemessen registered as a master in the Antwerp painter’s guild by 1524. He worked in Antwerp for more than 30 years, until his death in about 1556. A wealthy marriage and a successful painting career made him affluent.
 - C. Van Hemessen’s *Prodigal Son* displays essential characteristics of his art. This popular topic allowed artists free range to depict a secular-seeming story.
 1. A popular play in Antwerp placed the Prodigal Son in a brothel, the setting for Van Hemessen’s painting.
 2. The Prodigal Son indulges himself with women and wine, while a couple gambles and a procuress looks on. In the background at left, the next episode is told: The Prodigal Son has spent his inheritance and is cast out of the brothel.
 3. The large, dramatically posed figures in the foreground emphasize the theatrical nature of this scene and display aspects of Italian art.
 4. In the background at right, we see a banquet scene and the reconciliation of the Prodigal Son and his father. It is thought that the background scenes were painted by a collaborator.
 - D. Many of Van Hemessen’s subjects center on the individual’s confrontation with moral choices about avarice or licentiousness. His moralizing subjects, which appear secular but are derived from religious contexts, are his greatest innovation. They served Catholics and many Protestants as alternatives to traditional religious imagery.
 - E. Van Hemessen more than once portrayed the *Calling of Matthew*. In this version, several figures gather around a table. We look over the shoulder of the young man at right.

1. A young woman places her hands on a well-dressed older man at right—to seduce him, distract him, or call his attention to the figure of Jesus? The two older figures likely stand for Matthew's parents, sorrowing at their son's call from material wealth to spiritual gain.
 2. The older man is Matthew, the tax collector who Jesus called as a disciple. In ancient times, tax collectors were regarded as corrupt. Jesus' call to such a sinner indicated hope for all humans.
 3. We witness the moment of the call itself, when Matthew's entire way of life hangs in the balance. The powerful message conveys an essential dilemma of human life.
- F. Two of Van Hemessen's sons became painters, as did a daughter, Catarina. Female painters were rare in the 16th century. Among Catarina's portraits and religious paintings was a self-portrait from 1548, the first known dated self-portrait of an artist working at an easel.
- VI. Aertsen's art was also pictorially inventive. Originally from Amsterdam, he became a master in the Guild of Saint Luke in Antwerp in 1535 and a citizen there in 1542. He painted religious and genre scenes.
- A. Aertsen moved back to Amsterdam about 1557, possibly in response to increased political and religious strife in Antwerp after about 1560, as well as an economic downturn there.
- B. Aertsen's genre scenes include the *Egg Dance*, one of a group of paintings he made in the 1550s of life in the countryside.
1. The painting shows a folk custom in which a player had to roll an egg out of a bowl and around a chalk circle, then turn the bowl on top of the egg—all with his feet.
 2. The location for this scene was a brothel. The leeks, onion flowers, mussels, and eggs seen here were thought to be aphrodisiacs. Tarot symbols of a joker and goat symbolize drunkenness and lust.
 3. The painting was intended to hang above a fireplace. The likely owner was a city dweller, who could laugh with (or at) the country folk but appreciate the moral meaning.
- C. *Meat Stall* featured raw meat, which had never been the subject of a painting. This work, too, was a moralizing painting made for the Antwerp market.
1. The foreground shows a calf's head, a pig's head, and other meat. At right is a tavern scene. In the background are sketchy figures, barely discernable as the characters of the Flight into Egypt, with Mary stopping to give alms to the poor.
 2. This painting has been described as an inversion, with the traditional main subject, the religious narrative, shrunk and moved to the background and seemingly unimportant objects placed in the

foreground.

3. Archival work shows that the Butcher's Guild in Antwerp, which had a monopoly on selling meat, was under pressure by butchers outside the city in 1551. This threat to their monopoly would turn their economic traditions upside down.
4. A sign in the middle ground refers to a parcel of land for sale in 1551. A parcel of the same size was sold that year in a shady deal involving the city government.
5. An Antwerp contemporary could read this painting as a "raw" commentary on Antwerp government and economic trends, which seemed to favor the avaricious and the corrupt. This radical, highly topical painting reflected with misgivings on the new Antwerp market economy.

Works Discussed:

Joos van Cleve and Joachim Patinir: *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*, c. 1515–20, oil on panel, 1'9¼" x 2'2½", Musea voor Schone Kunsten van België, Brussels.

Joachim Patinir: *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*, 1520–24, oil on panel, 3'11½" x 5'9¾", Museo del Prado, Madrid.

Workshop of the Master of Frankfurt: *Adoration of the Christ Child*, c. 1510–20, oil on panel, overall: 1'11 1/8" x 1'4¼", painted surface: 1'10 7/8" x 1'4", The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Follower of Jan Joest von Kalkar: *Adoration of the Christ Child*, c. 1515, oil on panel, overall: 3'5" x 2'4", painted surface: 3'5" x 2'3 5/8", The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Pieter van der Borcht: *The New Bourse in Antwerp*, 1581, engraving, dimensions and location unknown.

Jan Sanders van Hemessen: *Prodigal Son*, c. 1536, oil on panel, 4'7" x 6'6", Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels.

Calling of Matthew, c. 1548, oil on panel, 3'9" x 4'6", Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

Catarina van Hemessen: *Self-Portrait*, 1548, oil on panel, 1' x 9½", Kunstmuseum Basel. Photo: Martin Bühler.

Pieter Aertsen: *Egg Dance*, 1552, oil on panel, 2'9" x 5'7¾", © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

Meat Stall, 1551, oil on panel, 4½" x 4'11", Uppsala University Collection, Sweden.

Essential Reading:

Snyder, *Northern Renaissance Art*, chapter 20.

Supplementary Reading:

Ainsworth and Christiansen, eds., *From Van Eyck to Bruegel: Early Netherlandish Painting in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*.

Dunkerton, Foister, and Penny; *Dürer to Veronese: Sixteenth-Century Paintings in the National Gallery*.

Honig, *Painting and the Market in Early Modern Antwerp*.

Silver, *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes: The Rise of Pictorial Genres in the Antwerp Art Market*.

Van der Stock et al., *Antwerp: Story of a Metropolis, 16th–17th Century*.

Wallen, *Jan van Hemessen: An Antwerp Painter between Reform and Counter-Reform*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Some scholars have insisted that the depiction of such themes as the story of the Prodigal Son was an excuse to show immoral or provocative behavior. Do you agree?
2. How would you categorize Pieter Aertsen's *Meat Stall*? Is it a genre painting? A still life? A history painting? None of these? Why was it apparently so popular?

Lecture Thirty-One

Internationalism and Northern Artists

Scope: In the 16th century, European courts sought to emulate Italian courts culturally and artistically. Three artists from the Netherlands—Jan Gossaert, Jan van Scorel, and Antonis Mor—traveled to and lived in Italy and later became court artists. Like Albrecht Dürer in Germany, Jan Gossaert (c. 1478–1532) traveled to Italy, studied its art, and brought back new ideas. He went to Rome in 1508–09 in a delegation led by Philip of Burgundy and continued to work for Philip after his return. In many paintings, he combined traditional Netherlandish style with Italianate elements. Gossaert was also an accomplished portraitist. Jan van Scorel (1495–1562) traveled to Italy, as well. After a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, he returned to Rome, where he served as a curator of Vatican art. Van Scorel continued to paint after moving back to the Netherlands, running a workshop in Utrecht. Antonis Mor (c. 1516–76), who trained with Van Scorel, traveled to Brussels, Lisbon, London, and other major cities, often to paint portraits of the Hapsburg family. One Italian influence for Mor was the three-quarter-length portrait view borrowed from Venetian artists.

Outline

- I. In the 16th century, many northern artists learned about Italian and classical art directly by traveling to Italy. Given that European courts sought to emulate Italian courts in artistic style, many of these artists also worked at court. This lecture examines three Netherlandish artists who spent time in Italy, then worked as court artists.
- II. Like Albrecht Dürer, Jan Gossaert traveled to Italy and brought back new ideas from contemporary and classical art. The experience influenced his stylistic innovations.
 - A. Gossaert's native town was likely Mabuse, then part of Flanders. His training is unknown. He became a master in Antwerp in 1503.
 - B. In 1508, Gossaert joined a party traveling to Rome led by Philip of Burgundy, Admiral of Zeeland, a northern province. In Rome, Gossaert copied ancient buildings and statuary and saw Michelangelo's Sistine ceilings when they were first underway. He stayed in Italy for at least six months.
 - C. In late 1509, Gossaert registered in a confraternity in Middelburg, the capital of Zeeland. Some of his religious paintings from 1509 to 1516 looked to early Netherlandish precedents. Others combined traditional Netherlandish references with Italianate ones.

- D. The *Doria Diptych* was likely commissioned by Antonio Siciliano, chamberlain to Maximilian Sforza, Duke of Milan.
1. On the left, Gossaert copied Jan van Eyck's *Virgin and Child in a Church*. On the right, he painted Siciliano with his patron saint, Anthony.
 2. Van Eyck's panel likely had a donor's portrait facing it, showing the patron in an interior. Gossaert's shows the patron in a landscape, paying homage to his Netherlandish predecessor while accommodating contemporary taste.
- E. In late 1516, Philip of Burgundy appointed Gossaert a court painter, one of two in charge of decorating the castle at Suytburg with themes from classical mythology, using a style inspired by classical art.
- F. *Neptune and Amphitrite* may have been part of the decoration at Suytburg. The subject of the sea god and his wife was appropriate for Philip's role as admiral of Zeeland.
1. These life-sized nudes are the first classical nudes of Netherlandish art. They stand in *contrapposto* poses, inspired in large part by Dürer's *Adam and Eve*.
 2. The porch in which Neptune and Amphitrite stand was based on ancient buildings Gossaert saw in Rome.
 3. The relationship of the figures to the space suggests the ancient practice of placing over-life-sized figures of the gods in the *cella*, the most sacred interior space of a classical temple.
- G. Gossaert was also an accomplished portraitist, and one his most impressive portraits is *Hendrick III, Count of Nassau-Breda*.
1. Hendrick had close relationships with Burgundian and Hapsburg elites. He was Charles V's guardian in the Netherlands; Charles' later made him *stadtholder* (military leader) of three provinces.
 2. Gossaert emphasized the sitter's physical presence through strong lighting. Hendrick's body and arms seem almost too large for the painting.
 3. Gossaert was immensely skilled at conveying textures, the different quality of light on different fabrics.
- H. Gossaert's *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin* asserts both the heritage and validity of religious images.
1. The painting has the same traditional balanced composition and colors as Rogier van der Weyden's painting of the same subject.
 2. But Gossaert's Virgin and Child appear in a celestial vision, accompanied by angels with a cloud of light around them, emphasizing the distinction between physical presence and visionary experience.
 3. Gossaert makes clear that Saint Luke works under divine inspiration. The painting is about both humility and talent.

4. No references are made to the "outside world." The statue of Moses with the Ten Commandments is a reminder of the necessity of obedience to God and church.

III. Like Gossaert, Jan van Scorel traveled to Italy, bringing elements of Italian Renaissance and classical art back with him.

- A. Van Scorel was raised in Alkmaar in the northern Netherlands. He moved to Amsterdam in 1512. Between 1517 and 1519, he left for a trip through Germany, Austria, and northern Italy.
- B. In 1520, Van Scorel left Venice for the Holy Land as a pilgrim. He returned to Italy, arriving in Rome by early 1522. The newly elected Dutch pope, Adrian VI, appointed Van Scorel curator of the Vatican art collections. He went to Utrecht in 1524 after Adrian died.
- C. Van Scorel's eclectic experiences gave him a deep appreciation for antique sculpture and painting, but he did not reject his northern heritage. In Utrecht, he first worked as a clergyman. An imperial act "removed" the illegitimacy that had held back his career.
- D. *Entry of Christ into Jerusalem* was a memorial for the Van Lochorst family in Utrecht. The painting was placed in Utrecht Cathedral near the family tomb monument.
1. The central panel of this triptych shows Christ and his followers on a hill as they prepare to enter Jerusalem. The city is shown in a background panorama—its earliest topographically correct rendering.
 2. The painting's contrasts of scale and color emphasize the view of Jerusalem from near the Mount of Olives. The landmarks are those of Van Scorel's day, not Christ's.
 3. The figures reflect Van Scorel's study of Italian art. See, for example, the twisted pose of the woman in the foreground.
- E. From 1527 to 1530, Van Scorel lived in Haarlem, where he painted the Haarlem Jerusalem Brotherhood, whose members had made pilgrimages to Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulcher. He is shown third from the right.
1. The figures are shown as if in a Palm Sunday procession; on the left, a servant is carrying a grisaille rendering of the Holy Sepulcher. The painting was meant for the brotherhood's chapel.
 2. All heads are shown on the same level, but Van Scorel distinguished them by their facial characteristics, expressions, and different hand poses. Sheets of paper tacked up on the balustrade identify the brotherhood members.
 3. For this painting, Van Scorel did not turn to Italian art for inspiration but stayed within his northern heritage.
- F. Van Scorel moved back to Utrecht in 1530, where he ran a workshop that executed large altarpieces, most of which were destroyed in the

iconoclastic riots of the 1560s.

1. *The Lamentation* is an example of these later Utrecht paintings. The light colors, Italianate facial types, and elegant poses characterize the art of Van Scorel's workshop of this time.
2. The vertically organized composition and solid figures create a powerful effect. Despite the Italianate appearance, the attention to landscape is northern in inspiration.

G. In 1550, Van Scorel was one of two artists chosen to restore the *Ghent Altarpiece*, a signal honor.

IV. Antonis Mor, who also traveled to Italy, had the most international career of all 16th-century Netherlandish artists.

- A. Van Scorel's apprentice and assistant before traveling to Italy, Mor registered in the Saint Luke's Guild in Antwerp in 1547.
- B. His exposure to Italian art proved significant. He borrowed from Venetian artists the three-quarter-length view for portraits but also used Van Scorel's sober naturalism.
- C. By 1549, Mor was employed by Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle, bishop of Arras. His work for Granvelle led to numerous other patrons, including Charles V's son Philip.
- D. *Portrait of Fernando Alvarez de Toledo, Third Duke of Alba*, showing a military leader for the Spanish Hapsburgs, displays Mor's fidelity to the precision of earlier Netherlandish portraits. The almost-life-sized figure with an assertive pose and powerful gaze suggests a sitter in control.
- E. Mor was skilled at creating court portraits in the 16th century and became the favored portraitist of many Hapsburgs.
- F. From 1567 on, Mor appears to have worked for the Duke of Alba and others in Brussels, later relocating to Antwerp.
- G. The years of Mor's success were difficult ones in the Low Countries, as dissatisfaction with the rule of Philip II and the role of the Inquisition grew stronger. Mor remained a loyal servant to the Hapsburg monarchy.
- H. In Mor's *Self-Portrait* from 1558, he sits at his easel.
 1. Expensively dressed, he looks at the viewer with distant confidence.
 2. A paper tacked onto the panel bears a poem in Greek, written by the artist's Humanist friend Dominicus Lampsonius, praising him as "the most famous of painters who surpasses Apelles and Zeuxis and all others, ancient and modern."

Works Discussed:

Jan Gossaert: *Doria Diptych (Virgin in the Church and Antonio Siciliano and Saint Anthony)*, c. 1513, oil on panel, each panel: 1'4" x 9½", Galleria Doria-Pamphili, Rome.

Neptune and Amphitrite, c. 1516, oil on panel, 6'2" x 4¾", Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin.

Portrait of Hendrick III, Count of Nassau-Breda, c. 1517, oil on panel, 1'10½" x 1'6", Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth.

Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin, c. 1520, oil on panel, 1'1¼" x 9", Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

Jan van Scorel: *Entry of Christ into Jerusalem* (central panel of the *Lochorst Triptych*), 1527, oil on panel, 2'7" x 4'9¾", Collection Centraal Museum, Utrecht, The Netherlands; gift 1941, Image and © CMU/Ernst Moritz.

Twelve Members of the Haarlem Brotherhood of Jerusalem Pilgrims, 1528–29, oil on panel, 3'9¼" x 9¾", Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem, The Netherlands.

The Lamentation, 1540, oil on panel, 5'6" x 4'5¾", Collection Centraal Museum, Utrecht, The Netherlands; Purchase with support of the Association Rembrandt 1930, Photo and © CMU/Ernst Moritz 03-2006.

Antonis Mor (Antonio Moro): *Portrait of Fernando Alvarez de Toledo, Third Duke of Alba*, 1549, oil on panel, 3'6½" x 2'8¾", Courtesy of the Hispanic Society of America, New York.

Self-Portrait, 1558, oil on panel, 3'8½" x 2'9", Uffizi, Florence.

Essential Reading:

Snyder, *Northern Renaissance Art*, chapters 19, 21.

Supplementary Reading:

Campbell, *The Renaissance Portrait*.

Kloek et al., *Art before the Iconoclasm: Northern Netherlandish Art, 1525–1580*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Which depiction of Saint Luke and the Virgin Mary do you think exalts the status of the artist more, Rogier van der Weyden's or Jan Gossaert's?
2. Netherlandish artists, most notably Antonis Mor, were internationally famous for their ability to make portraits. But some 16th-century Italian artists considered northern artists less capable of "creative" work, as opposed to replication of nature. What do you think of this critique?

Lecture Thirty-Two

Maarten van Heemskerck

Scope: The second generation of Netherlandish artists to travel to Italy included Maarten van Heemskerck (1498–1574), a successful artist who spent most of his career in Haarlem. Like his predecessors, Van Heemskerck combined classical, Italian Renaissance, and Netherlandish elements in his paintings. Van Heemskerck's early paintings reflect the style of Jan van Scorel, one of his masters. In Van Scorel's workshop, Van Heemskerck learned to paint works that married Italian motifs, such as large, three-dimensional nudes, with traditional Netherlandish landscapes and symbolism. Van Heemskerck spent nearly five years in Rome starting in mid-1532, a productive stay during which he studied ancient ruins and sculpture. He led an active workshop on his return to Haarlem, producing portraits, altarpieces, and other paintings that revealed his continued fascination with Roman art. After some of his altarpieces were destroyed during the iconoclasm of 1566, he continued to design prints, which were popular for generations to come.

Outline

- I. Maarten van Heemskerck was part of the second generation of Netherlandish artists who went to Italy. Though he did not become a court painter like his predecessors, he also absorbed Italian Renaissance and classical art while maintaining the Netherlandish tradition in which he was trained. His entire career, other than his time in Rome, was spent in Haarlem.
 - A. Born in the village of Heemskerk, Van Heemskerck trained with two masters, Cornelis Willemsz and Jan van Scorel.
 - B. Among his early works is *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*, a painting in the style of Van Scorel (to whom it was once attributed), with pastel shades and an extensive landscape.
 - C. The Virgin and Child exhibits Van Scorel's classicizing style in the child's nude form and pose and Mary's Italianate hairstyle and dress. The background looks like ancient Roman landscape scenes.
 1. The Christ Child sits on a transparent globe topped by a cross, a symbol of his dominion over the Earth. The butterfly he grasps symbolizes the soul.
 2. Again, we see a combination of Italianate style and traditional Netherlandish symbols.
 - D. Early-17th-century biographer Karel van Mander claimed that Van Scorel was jealous of his assistant's talents and sent him out of his

workshop, a story that may have a grain of truth.

- II. Van Heemskerck's most impressive portrait from this early period is *Family Portrait*, which shows the family of Pieter Jan Foppesz, a well-to-do town councilor and church warden with whom Van Heemskerck lived.
 - A. This work is in the mainstream of 16th-century portraiture in the firm projection of the figures' three dimensions, compositional balance, and variety of poses. Most striking is the informality of the poses.
 - B. The two older children turn to each other. The father lays a hand on his daughter's shoulder and holds up a glass, as if welcoming us to his table. The mother looks down as she holds her youngest child, an infant—looking very much like the Christ Child in *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*—who grasps the crucifix on her rosary.
 1. The crucifix, rosary, and wine glass indicate that the family was Catholic. Even this casual portrait carries symbolic meaning.
 2. The painting anticipates the development of independent still lifes in Haarlem.
 - C. The artist emphasizes mutual shared affection rather than the hierarchical family structure of traditional portraits. The portrait is in keeping, though, with the growing emphasis of the family as the site for proper moral education.
 - D. The only strange element is the backdrop of the cloud-covered sky. It's unclear if the setting is inside or outdoors.
- III. Van Heemskerck gives a time-honored subject a fresh interpretation in *Saint Luke Painting the Virgin*, which he donated to the Guild of Saint Luke in Haarlem, probably for the guild's chapel in the church of Saint Bavo.
 - A. Luke paints (not draws) the Virgin and Child, who are seated on a platform next to an angel. A tacked-up sheet of paper has a Dutch verse stating that Van Heemskerck donated the painting to honor Saint Luke and to preserve his memory in Haarlem.
 - B. An older Saint Luke sits at his easel. An ox, his traditional attribute, is shown here as a classical relief, with the ox carrying off the saint. A classical *herm* (head on a plinth) tops his easel.
 - C. A bearded, laurel-wreathed man makes a gesture of encouragement while pointing at the panel. This figure may stand for creative inspiration or, as Van Mander suggests, may be a self-portrait.
 - D. This painting is an attempt to reconcile the Christian and classical worlds. It is also about the status of the artist as an inspired creator.
- IV. Van Heemskerck went to Rome in mid-1532, remaining there for about four and a half years. Already conversant with classical art through Van Scorel, he nonetheless learned a great deal. Pages from a sketchbook show

his work from this period.

- A. One drawing documents the history of architecture in Rome. It shows the remains of Old St. Peter's, the 4th-century Roman basilica, with the New St. Peter's under construction in the background. The contrast in scale between new and old expresses the artist's pride that the contemporary world could surpass the ancient one.
 - B. Another pen-and-ink drawing depicts a private collection of antique sculpture at Casa Sassi.
- V. After his return from Italy, Van Heemskerck led a successful, active workshop that produced religious paintings, portraits, and paintings of classical subjects.
- A. By this time, Van Heemskerck had attained a loftier social status. He was a church warden at Saint Bavo's, dean of the Guild of Saint Luke, and a town councilor. He was also a member of a rhetorician's chamber, an association that promoted Humanist culture.
 - B. *Triumph of Bacchus* depicts powerful, massive nudes in complex poses. The subject is the return from India of Bacchus, Roman god of wine, accompanied by his followers.
 - 1. The composition resembles that of an ancient sarcophagus in its procession across space. The large, muscular figures owe as much to Renaissance art as to antique statuary. For Van Heemskerck, all of these sources were equally viable.
 - 2. The painting condemns the pagan licentiousness of the followers of Bacchus. We see drunkenness and its consequences.
 - C. *Self-Portrait before the Colosseum* evidences the painter's continuing fascination with Rome. Van Heemskerck shows himself in bust length, with his turned head strongly lit, emphasizing its three-dimensionality.
 - 1. In the background is the Colosseum, one of the most famous ruins of Roman antiquity. A bearded man sitting in front draws in a sketchbook, perhaps representing a younger Van Heemskerck.
 - 2. At first glance, the Colosseum looks flat and distant. The view behind the artist is a painting within a painting, an illusion that speaks to the painter's skill and his actual distance from Rome.
 - 3. On an allegorical level, ruins were a symbol of life's passing.
- VI. Van Heemskerck received commissions from Delft, partly through his connection with Humanist Cornelis Musius. A second depiction of *Saint Luke Painting the Virgin* was probably made for the Delft Guild.
- A. This composition is arranged vertically rather than horizontally. The space is much deeper.
 - B. The positions of the Virgin and Child and Saint Luke are reversed; the saint now holds the dominant place at left. All are large, impressive figures. The Christ Child is in a complex pose.

- C. Saint Luke paints, holding a small tablet. One hoof of the ox rests on an open book, near a 2nd-century medical book by the physician Galen; Saint Luke was supposedly a physician.
- D. The background shows a courtyard with statuary in niches and artists on a balcony looking down on a sculptor. The scene was clearly based on the drawing Van Heemskerck made at Casa Sassi in Rome.

VII. Van Heemskerck was busy painting altarpieces after returning to Haarlem. The *Ecce Homo Triptych (Behold the Man)* was made for a church or monastery in Delft.

- A. The donors are shown as prophets on the exterior wings. In the center, Pilate presents "the man" (Christ) to the crowd to decide whether or not he will be spared. We are part of the crowd.
- B. The classicism of Christ's beautiful torso and the architecture accompany a Netherlandish naturalism and meticulous painting style.
- C. This altarpiece was among the last painted by Van Heemskerck in the 1560s. The iconoclasm that began in the southern Netherlands moved north by September 1566 and ravaged the world of religious art—but the iconoclasts protected this painting.
- D. Van Heemskerck's painting of religious subjects ended around this time. No painting is dated later than 1567. He continued to design prints, working with Dirck Volkertsz Coornheert in Haarlem.

VIII. Van Heemskerck's prodigious output included more than 600 prints, sold in Antwerp and Haarlem, both important printing centers in the mid-16th century. Many drawings for these prints survive.

- A. One of Van Heemskerck's print series was *The Prodigal Son*, engraved by printmaker Philips Galle.
- B. One print shows the Prodigal in a tavern. In the background, he is expelled after squandering his inheritance. The large, muscular figures are placed in a classical architectural setting.
- C. Another print from the series shows the father-son reunion. Again, the main figures are in the center, surrounded by classical architecture.
- D. These prints were enormously popular and not just in Van Heemskerck's time. Artists of the 17th century, including Rembrandt van Rijn, referred to them in their own works.
- E. The last years of Van Heemskerck's life were challenging for him and other residents of Haarlem. Some of his artworks were destroyed by iconoclasts in 1566. War came to the Netherlands in 1568, the result of conflict between the inhabitants of the Netherlands and their Spanish overlords. The elderly Van Heemskerck fled to Amsterdam during a siege in 1572, returning the next year.

Works Discussed:

Maarten van Heemskerck: *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*, c. 1530, oil on panel, 1'10 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 2'5", Samuel H. Kress Collection, Image © 2007 Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Family Portrait of Pieter Jan Foppesz, c. 1530, oil on panel, 3'10 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 4'7 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Kassel, Germany.

Saint Luke Painting the Virgin, 1532, oil on panel, 5'6" x 7'8 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem.

New and Old Saint Peter's, Rome, mid-1530s, pen and ink drawing, 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin.

Sculpture Court of Casa Sassi, Rome, mid-1530s, pen and ink drawing, 9 x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin.

Triumph of Bacchus, c.1537–38, oil on panel, 1'10" x 3'6", Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

Self-Portrait before the Colosseum, 1553, oil on canvas, 1'4 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 1'9 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge, Cambridge.

Saint Luke Painting the Virgin, c. 1550, oil on canvas, 6'8" x 4'9", Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rennes.

Ecce Homo Triptych, 1559–60, oil on panel, center panel: 7'2" x 4'11"; side panels: 7'2" x 2'2 $\frac{3}{8}$ ", Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem.

The Prodigal Son (one scene from a series of six plates designed by Heemskerck and engraved by Philips Galle), 1562, engraving, 8 x 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", © Staatliche Museen, Kassel, Germany.

Essential Reading:

Snyder, *Northern Renaissance Art*, chapter 21.

Supplementary Reading:

Kloek et al., *Art before the Iconoclasm: Northern Netherlandish Art, 1525–1580*.

Veldman, *Maarten van Heemskerck and Dutch Humanism in the Sixteenth Century*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Was Van Heemskerck's greatest allegiance to Netherlandish tradition or to the art of antiquity and the Italian Renaissance?
2. How does the collaboration between a print designer, such as Van Heemskerck, and a printmaker differ from the collaboration in Antwerp painting workshops?

Lecture Thirty-Three

Pieter Bruegel—Religious Subjects

Scope: Pieter Bruegel the Elder (c. 1525/30–69), the best-known Netherlandish artist in the period after Hieronymus Bosch, is famous for his paintings of peasants, yet he thought of himself as an innovator in the context of traditional Netherlandish art. Our first look at Bruegel's career traces his early years in Antwerp, his visit to Italy in the 1550s, and his work as a print designer for the publisher Hieronymus Cock. Unlike his peers and predecessors, Bruegel was not much influenced by his Italian travels. Rather, his trip seems to have confirmed his loyalty to native traditions. Some of Bruegel's early print designs and paintings of religious subjects show that he borrowed some of Bosch's fantastic imagery but generally not his pessimistic views. In subjects both new and traditional, Bruegel stepped carefully during the anti-Protestant Spanish Inquisition so as not to alienate his patrons.

Outline

- I. Pieter Bruegel, the best-known Netherlandish artist in the period after Hieronymus Bosch, is famous for his paintings of peasants yet saw himself as an innovator in the context of traditional Netherlandish art.
 - A. Our knowledge of Bruegel's life is limited to Karel van Mander's biography, not all of which is accurate. He was probably born in Breda, joined the Guild of Saint Luke in Antwerp in 1551, and trained with Pieter Coecke van Aelst, a court painter to Charles V.
 - B. Bruegel visited Rome, Palermo, and Naples, returning to Antwerp in 1555. Unlike his contemporaries and predecessors, he did not try to assimilate classical/Italian and Netherlandish art. If anything, the voyage seems to have confirmed his loyalty to native traditions.
 - C. After his return to Antwerp, Bruegel worked for Hieronymus Cock, whose shop disseminated prints throughout Europe. Cock commissioned designs from artists and farmed out the engraving work. This separation of design and execution was new for engraving in the 16th century. The result was more engravings on a wider range of topics—and a lower status for engravings.
 - D. Bruegel married Mayken Coecke and moved to Brussels in 1563. Their sons, Pieter the Younger and Jan, would also train as painters.
- II. The *Temptation of Saint Anthony* was among Bruegel's earliest print designs and the first in Bosch's style. Decades after his death, Bosch's imagery still had great appeal. Bruegel was referred to as a "second Bosch."
 - A. The artist specified shading and details with precision for the engraver.

- B. This print does not carry the name of the designer or the engraver, believed to have been Pieter van der Heyden, who worked with Bruegel frequently. The preparatory drawing is inscribed with Bruegel's name.
 - C. The idea of the print was that the hermit saint could rise above his afflictions. The saint kneels in the right foreground, seemingly oblivious to the demons and wild creatures around him. A Boschian giant human head, with a half-shattered window eye, supports a half-open fish.
 - D. The spirit here seems different from the condemnatory nature of Bosch's fantasies. Human behavior may be characterized by folly, but the saint prays on in peace. The monsters seem more humorous than threatening.
- III. The preparatory drawing survives for *Fides (Faith)*, one print of the *Seven Virtues* series made in 1556–60 by Bruegel and engraver Philips Galle.
- A. Faith is characterized as Catholic and sacramental in nature. Baptism, communion, confession, and marriage are depicted in a large church space. The allegorical figure of Faith, dressed like a nun, holds a Bible and stands on a tomb slab, pulled aside to reveal a tomb with the instruments of Christ's Passion scattered around it. The open tomb of the resurrected Jesus is the most basic belief of Christianity.
 - B. By choosing a church setting for the depiction of Catholic sacraments, Bruegel allied himself with an old tradition.
 - C. Many have gathered to hear the preacher's words. Some have speculated that this scene was touched by the Reformation's emphasis on reading and preaching the word of God. If so, the print nonetheless was acceptable to Catholics.
 - D. Bruegel's drawing style is typical for his engraving designs. The line work is delicate but highly detailed and precise. The Latin text on the drawing is believed to be from a different hand than Bruegel's.
- IV. Bruegel also pursued painting while working for Cock. In this realm as well, his art is a mixture of tradition and innovation, with echoes of Bosch.
- A. *The Fall of the Rebel Angels* is a crowded battle scene between good and evil. Angels loyal to God are lovely, agile winged creatures. Their opponents have been transformed by sinful rebellion into hybrids of animals, insects, and humans. They seem less otherworldly and nightmarish than Bosch's hybrids.
 - 1. The outcome is never in doubt, with the radiance of heaven shining on the confident angelic warriors, whose bright colors separate them from their depraved former comrades.
 - 2. The painting has a decorative quality that makes it less pessimistic than similar works by Bosch.
 - B. Much more frightening is the imagery of *The Triumph of Death*. A vast, ruined landscape almost mocks the popular world landscape of Joachim Patinir and his successors.
 - 1. The viewpoint is higher and more distant than in the *Fall of the Rebel Angels*. We observe but are removed from the fray. We see frightful scenes of human failings and the horrors of death but no Christian symbols of the end of time or the Last Judgment.
 - 2. Death is everywhere, represented by skeletons moving through the scene without mercy or compassion. Death is a heartless killer—but an equalizer as well. An emperor or churchman will be cut down as surely as the "common folk" who try to flee.
 - 3. The armies of death outnumber the defenseless humans they pursue. The scene is grimmer than Bosch's images of hell because it is connected to the real world. There is no hope and no escape, despite the presence of a church.
 - 4. Some scholars have associated this pessimistic image with the Netherlanders' reaction to harsh Spanish rule and the Inquisition of the 1560s. The relentlessness of war was a familiar subject.
- V. *The Tower of Babel* presented a relatively new subject in Netherlandish art. Depicted as religious history, it was also a metaphor for excessive pride.
- A. The story in Genesis relates the desire of Noah's descendants to build a tower to heaven. For their hubris, they were punished by God and suddenly spoke many languages, incomprehensible to each other.
 - B. The project leader, Nimrod, is in the lower left. The bird's-eye viewpoint here was common for 16th-century panoramic landscapes. In this case, it also suggests God's viewpoint.
 - C. The building project is underway. The scale of the tower is indicated by the diminutive buildings and harbor that surround it and by the cloud ringing its top.
 - D. Bruegel inventively imagined the ruins of the Colosseum in Rome as an uncompleted building. The pride of the Roman Empire was now a ruined hulk, an earlier example of hubris.
 - E. The message was not necessarily entirely negative. A six-language version of the Bible was printed in Antwerp in 1566, a few years after Bruegel made this painting. Antwerp's international character was what made it so prosperous.
 - F. Bruegel produced about 40 paintings during his short career, painting in very thin layers, not the thick glazes of his Netherlandish predecessors. His figures were relatively quickly executed, too.
- VI. *The Carrying of the Cross* shows Christ struggling with the cross on the way to Calvary. Bruegel has combined the world landscape of previous Antwerp painters with a solemn rendering of a tragic moment in religious

history.

- A. Bruegel builds on Martin Schongauer's precedent in imagining the procession as a crowded event. But here, a vast landscape contains many different groups of figures and individual actions.
 - 1. Near the lower left, Simon of Cyrene struggles with several soldiers while his wife tries to hold him back. He has been conscripted to help Jesus carry his cross. He doesn't want to get involved, but no one lifts a finger to help.
 - 2. Elsewhere, a cart carries two thieves and two priests who attend them. Their crucifixes are purposefully anachronistic, Christian symbols before Christianity.
 - 3. Throughout the painting, people walk and ride, children run, animals dart about. Some pay attention to the procession; most do not, waiting for the more spectacular Crucifixion.
 - 4. In the right foreground are the Virgin Mary, John the Evangelist, Mary Magdalene, and another Mary who followed Christ. They are rent by grief, frozen in eloquent poses.
 - B. As in Rogier van der Weyden's *Descent from the Cross*, Bruegel portrays a tableau. Bruegel's educated audience would have understood this reference to a hallowed artistic tradition.
 - C. Bruegel furthers this tradition in showing the sacred group alone in its sorrow. Most people do not grieve or even watch closely.
 - D. Jesus himself is a small figure who has fallen to the ground under the weight of the cross; he seems almost unimportant. Bruegel's message: The world can be turned upside down, as when God-made man dies as a redeeming sacrifice, but most people do not know, perhaps out of fear of sacrificing their everyday life, or perhaps out of ignorance.
 - E. Bruegel's use of Netherlandish artistic tradition and his innovative approach to landscape convey truth about human nature and a new way to suggest the miracle of the central belief of Christianity.
- VII. One of Bruegel's last paintings was *The Parable of the Blind*. The New Testament subject is a metaphor used by Christ: "And if a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into the pit."
- A. The format is different from most of Bruegel's, more frieze-like in its proportions. We do not know where this painting was intended to hang.
 - B. A line of blind men walks tentatively from left to right. The first has fallen into a ditch, and the second now stumbles. The downward diagonal arrangement of the men makes their fate clear.
 - C. Though two men wear rosaries, their real blindness is spiritual. In the ancient world and in Bruegel's time, such afflictions were often thought to be punishments from God.

VIII. Can we conclude anything from this group of paintings about Bruegel's own beliefs or religious affiliation? Scholars have suggested that he was a devout Catholic of an Erasmian persuasion or that he was a Protestant who hid his true beliefs.

- A. He worked in a dangerous milieu, with the Spanish Inquisition's "no tolerance" policy toward Protestants. Bruegel clearly did not want to alienate his patrons, important officials of church and state.
- B. Bruegel set great stock in the individual choice of good or ill and believed that individuals would bear the consequences for their choices.

Works Discussed:

Pieter Bruegel: *Temptation of Saint Anthony*, 1556, pen and ink on brown paper, 8½" x 1¼", Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

Fides, 1559, pen drawing in brown ink, 8½ x 11½", © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

The Fall of the Rebel Angels, 1562, oil on panel, 3'10" x 5'3¼", Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts, Brussels.

The Triumph of Death, c. 1562, oil on panel, 3'10" x 5'3¼", Museo del Prado, Madrid.

Tower of Babel, 1563, oil on panel, 3'8¾" x 5'1", Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

Carrying of the Cross, 1564, oil on panel, 4¾" x 5'7", Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

The Parable of the Blind, 1568, tempera on linen, 2'10" x 5'½", Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte, Naples.

Pieter van der Heyden (after Bruegel): *Temptation of Saint Anthony*, 1556, copper engraving, 9¾" x 1¼", Private Collection.

Essential Reading:

Snyder, *Northern Renaissance Art*, chapter 22.

Gibson, *Bruegel*.

Supplementary Reading:

Orenstein, ed., *Pieter Bruegel the Elder: Drawings and Prints*.

Seipel, ed., *Pieter Bruegel the Elder at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna*.

Questions to Consider:

- 1. In what ways was Bruegel a traditional Netherlandish religious artist?
- 2. Is *Triumph of Death* a religious painting?

Lecture Thirty-Four

Pieter Bruegel—Folk Culture and Traditions

Scope: Pieter Bruegel's most popular images depicted the peasant life and folk culture of his time. Scenes of peasant dances and wedding feasts, ice skating on frozen rivers, and children playing at first seem to be straightforward, if humorous, depictions of everyday life among the urban and rural working classes. Yet these artworks also reflected the attitudes of Bruegel and his Humanist circle of friends and patrons toward less educated members of 16th-century society. While Bruegel's circle was genuinely fascinated by peasant life and customs, their class differences cannot be overlooked. Scholars have debated whether Bruegel's images of peasants were meant to be affectionately humorous or condemnatory of their behavior.

Outline

- I. Bruegel's *Blind Leading the Blind* (*The Parable of the Blind*). reflects the 16th-century attitude that disabilities were punishments from God. Contemporaries would have found this image humorous. It's the closest Bruegel comes to condemning rather than observing human behavior.
 - A. Bruegel was most famous in his own time for his depictions of peasant life and folk culture. His interest reflects 16th-century Humanists' desire to expand, understand, and categorize their knowledge of the world.
 - B. One area of interest was vernacular peasant culture. Collections of folk sayings and proverbs, such as Erasmus's *Adages*, became popular.
 - C. Such efforts resonated in the Low Countries, which had been ruled for years by outsiders and where residents asserted the validity of their local culture. In Bruegel's view, Netherlandish subjects were as worthy as those of classical antiquity and the Italian Renaissance.
 - D. Not all of Bruegel's peasant scenes celebrated that culture, though most were humorous. We need to consider these works individually to note their range of ideas and reactions.
- II. *Big Fish Eat Little Fish*, a collaboration with print publisher Hieronymus Cock, has a drawing dated 1556 and an engraving dated 1557. The engraver was likely Pieter van der Heyden.
 - A. A Latin inscription reads, "Little fish are the good of big fish," and in Dutch, "Look, son, I have long known that the big fish eat the little fish." Use of both languages may have reflected the 16th-century tendency to pair folk sayings with ancient proverbs, but it also could have widened the audience to people who read Dutch but not Latin.

- B. Cock is listed as the publisher in the abbreviation *excu.*, for *excudit*, or "published it." The inventor is listed falsely as Hieronymus Bos (Bosch). Cock implied that this was Bosch's design, but he added Bruegel's name as the true creator's fame grew.
- C. This work is all about Bruegel's imagination. It's more realistic but also more humorous than Bosch's work. The basic message is that it's a dog-eat-dog world where the strong pick on the weak.

III. Bruegel was among the first artists to subspecialize in winter scenes, such as the print *Ice Skating before the Gate of Saint George*. In fact, Europe from 1550 into the 17th century was colder than from 1500 to 1550. Rivers and canals froze over more frequently.

- A. In the print, all kinds of people—young and old, large and small, rich and poor—enjoy the ice. Others observe from the bridge. Some play *kolf*, a popular game that combined golf and hockey.
- B. Is this print more than a charming scene of winter pleasure?
 1. Skating was used as a metaphor for the hazards of life. One minute you're up; the next, you're down.
 2. The prominence of Saint George's Gate may have referred to a scandal involving the embezzlement of construction funds for the new city walls, suggesting the notion of skating on thin ice ethically.
 3. Another theory is that the new city walls referred to the harsh rule of Spain over the Netherlands and that the skaters represented the necessity for caution among the townspeople.

IV. Showing other themes of folk culture is *Netherlandish Proverbs*, a visual equivalent to popular compendia of local proverbs.

- A. One source for this painting was artist Frans Hogenberg's etching *The Blue Cloak*, which depicted 40 proverbs. Bruegel shows at least 85.
- B. Every person here proves a victim of folly. Bruegel scholar Walter Gibson reminds us of the 16th-century tendency to see the world as theater, as something both comic and tragic when viewed with the proper detachment.
- C. Scatological, religious, and sensual folly are all featured here. We can recognize the meaning of some proverbs—the absurdity of putting on armor to bell a cat, for example. Others have faded into obscurity—the man attacking a pillar is a "pillar biter," or hypocrite.
- D. Bruegel's expressive tone suggests the amused detachment of one who sees and accepts this foolish world for what it is. The owner of this work was likely someone from Bruegel's Humanist circle, who would have appreciated this message in such a colorful, creative guise.

V. *Children's Games* takes the same approach to the pastimes of children, who

show a connection to the world of adults.

- A. A viewpoint high above a village shows children moving to and fro with hoops and sticks, playing leapfrog, turning cartwheels, and chasing each other. Some even play “grownup” with a marriage ceremony.
- B. This behavior, natural enough to us, held a comical appeal for Bruegel’s contemporaries. But there is a lesson to be learned, a warning about the modeling of behavior. In the 16th century, children were expected to play sometimes, but this takeover of the streets shows that there is no one to teach them civility and self-control.

VI. Three of Bruegel’s most famous paintings present peasant customs from outside the major cities:

- A. Biographer Karel van Mander claimed that Bruegel and a friend, German merchant Hans Frankert, enjoyed traveling to the countryside to attend peasant weddings while dressed to play the part. To avoid mockery, they would bring wedding gifts.
 - 1. In the *Wedding Dance*, dancers snake their way through the painting from foreground to background. Bruegel was very good at conveying motion. Here, we sense the dancers moving as a group.
 - 2. These uninhibited peasants dance, drink, and converse. We see the bride with her loose, flowing hair and some guests with mouths agape, a social faux pas.
 - 3. What would Bruegel and his patrons think of these peasants? This is a hotly debated question. Some art historians insist that this and other artworks were negative depictions of peasants’ licentious behavior.
 - 4. Another view holds that 16th-century city dwellers nostalgic for simple country life would have seen the paintings as playful and humorous rather than mean-spirited or condemnatory.
- B. Two more peasant scenes seem to heroicize country folk through their monumental forms. The *Wedding Banquet* treats the peasants’ banquet seriously, as if it were a feast of the Olympian gods.
 - 1. At a wedding table set up in a barn, the bride sits below a paper crown hung against a kind of cloth of honor. Bagpipers serenade the guests. Figures include the village notary, a monk, and the local lord of the manor.
 - 2. Planks loaded with servings of porridge are carried in, while the wedding beer is poured. A child in the foreground cleans out a bowl and licks his fingers.
 - 3. We are much closer to the events than in the *Wedding Dance*, and the figures are correspondingly larger. The rustic characters have bulky shapes and big feet but their own kind of dignity.

C. *Peasant Dance* looks at the village fete head on, a significant change from the elevated point of view in Bruegel’s other paintings of daily life. We seem to stand at the edge of the excitement.

- 1. A couple rushes in from the right in fear of missing the events. A bagpiper plays on the left as others drink, play, or kiss. Everyone enjoys the nice spring day.
- 2. A depiction of the Virgin and Child on a tree at right suggests that country folk were more conservative than city folk.
- 3. This is the most classically conceived of Bruegel’s paintings. His choice of an intellectual compositional style to glorify the local peasantry might be read as ironic or as championing of his own culture.

VII. A witty drawing, *The Painter and the Connoisseur*, suggests that artists were not always in complete harmony with their clientele.

- A. An elderly artist stands at his easel—this is a fantasy, as painters in that day sat—with brush in hand. He looks away in a moment of inward contemplation. This is not a self-portrait of Bruegel, who was far younger at the time.
- B. A man peers over the artist’s shoulder, his mouth agape at what he sees on the easel. His glasses indicate poor eyesight, but he likes what he sees, for he gropes for his money bag. Before the painting is finished, he wants to buy it.
- C. Bruegel seems to satirize both sides of the relationship. The artist seems embittered and too fond of his own “vision,” but vision is what this customer lacks. He can hardly see yet is eager to buy. Bruegel implicates the more commercial relationship between painters and buyers in Antwerp after 1550.
- D. Despite the fact that Bruegel painted on commission, he provided popular subjects: landscapes, peasant scenes, and reconceived religious paintings. Even the somewhat standard size of his panels suggests commercialization.
- E. Most interesting is that Bruegel produced a drawing that was likely not a print design but a finished work of art, which emphasized the economic nature of art production and consumption.

Works Discussed:

Pieter Bruegel: *Big Fish Eat Little Fish*, 1556, pen and brush drawing, 8 ½" x 1', Albertina, Vienna.

Netherlandish Proverbs, 1559, oil on panel, 3'10" x 5'4", Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin.

Children’s Games, 1560, oil on panel, 3'10 ½" x 5'3¼", Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

Wedding Dance, 1566, oil on panel, 3'11" x 5'2", Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit.

Wedding Banquet, c. 1568, oil on panel, 3'8¾" x 5'4½", Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

Peasant Dance, c. 1568, oil on panel, 3'8¾" x 5'4½", Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

The Painter and the Connoisseur, mid-1560s, drawing, 10 x 8½", Albertina, Vienna.

Frans Huys (after Bruegel): *Skating before the St. George's Gate*, Antwerp, 1558, engraving, 9 1/8 x 11¾", The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Pieter van der Heyden (after Bruegel): *Big Fish Eat Little Fish*, 1557, engraving, first state of three, 9 x 11 5/8", Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1917 (17.3.859), The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Essential Reading:

Snyder, *Northern Renaissance Art*, chapter 22.

Gibson, *Bruegel*.

Supplementary Reading:

Kavaler, *Parables of Order and Enterprise*.

Meadow, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder's Netherlandish Proverbs and the Practice of Rhetoric*.

Orenstein, ed., *Pieter Bruegel the Elder: Drawings and Prints*.

Seipel, ed., *Pieter Bruegel the Elder at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Some scholars have called Bosch a late medieval artist and Bruegel an early modern artist. Do you agree with this distinction?
2. Why would well-to-do bankers and merchants want to display images of peasants in their homes?

Lecture Thirty-Five

Pieter Bruegel—The Land and the Peasant

Scope: Many of Pieter Bruegel's most beloved images concern the relationship of peasants and the land, reflecting his career-long interest in landscape, a major subject in the art of Antwerp. The greatest impact of Bruegel's journey to Italy seems to have been his exposure to alpine scenery. Still, Bruegel's most innovative paintings of landscapes and peasant themes have their precedents in earlier Netherlandish art. For example, *The Seasons* was inspired by illuminated manuscripts. Bruegel designed many prints but actually made only one, *Rabbit Hunt*. As in other works, it takes on meaning through a Dutch proverb. In two late works, *The Beekeepers* and *Magpie on the Gallows*, Bruegel may have used landscape in a purposefully enigmatic way to satisfy various patrons during a time of religious and political strife.

Outline

- I. The relationship of peasants and the land is reflected in many of Pieter Bruegel's most popular images, a fact not surprising since landscape was such a major subject in Antwerp art circles. An early drawing, *Landscape with a Fortified Town*, was likely inspired by the alpine scenery Bruegel saw in Italy.
 - A. The style of drawing was inspired by 16th-century Venetian artists, who used little flicks of the pen to achieve a vibrant, organic look. However, Bruegel's drawing doesn't look anything like a Venetian artist's.
 - B. The high viewpoint is typical of Antwerp paintings, but the open foreground is different from typical Netherlandish landscapes, which placed at least one large element in the foreground.
 - C. The fortified town takes up most of the middle ground. For Bruegel and his contemporaries, landscape implied a place inhabited by humans. The storm clouds and fortification suggest a sense of uneasiness.
- II. Bruegel's collaboration with print publisher Hieronymus Cock was most productive from 1555 to 1563, when Bruegel left Antwerp for Brussels. The artist's sole experiment with printmaking was an etching, *The Rabbit Hunt*.
 - A. As we saw earlier, etching was an easier print medium for a painter to work with than engraving because pulling the etching needle through the ground on the plate was akin to drawing. The chemical "biting" into the plate lent an organic quality to landscapes.
 - B. In a large expanse of mountain and river valley, a rabbit hunter aims

his bow at two rabbits; another hunter comes around the back of a tree with a spear. A Dutch proverb of the time asserted that he who chases two rabbits catches neither.

- C. Ultimately, though, Bruegel was most interested in capturing the way light shimmered across various surfaces on a beautiful day.

III. Some of Bruegel's landscape paintings are among his best-known works.

An early example is *The Fall of Icarus*. Scholars debate the authenticity of its two versions. At the very least, they reflect Bruegel's ideas and style.

- A. On a hillside, a peasant and his horse plow the land, the sun shining brightly. Further down the slope are a shepherd, his dog, and a flock of sheep. A man sits and fishes at water's edge. The background reveals an extensive landscape with a city and a harbor.
- B. It seems to be a beautiful, uneventful day until we notice a pair of human legs struggling in the water. With this detail, we realize that Bruegel for once has turned to classical tradition—in this case, the story of Icarus and Daedalus.
 - 1. The son and father escaped from prison with wings of wax and feathers. Daedalus warned Icarus not to fly too close to the sun, but Icarus did just that and, when the wax melted, fell to his death.
 - 2. Bruegel's source for this story is the Roman poet Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which reads, "Some fisher, perhaps, plying his quivering rod, some shepherd leaning on his staff, or a peasant bent over his plough handle caught sight of them as they flew past and stood stock still in astonishment, believing that these creatures who could fly through the air must be gods."
- C. In Bruegel's reinterpretation of the story, only the shepherd looks up. (It's possible that Daedalus was shown, but the painting is damaged.) The fisherman and ploughman work on, oblivious to the fate of Icarus.
- D. The story has been interpreted as a warning to those who would try to rise beyond their rank, but Bruegel seems to emphasize the smallness of any one life in the world. This was Bruegel's only painted mythology.

IV. Bruegel's most famous landscapes depict the seasons of the year. Of six originals, one has been lost. They were made for banker Nicolaes Jonghelinck's country residence outside Antwerp.

- A. One of Bruegel's most important patrons, Jonghelinck at one point owned 16 paintings by Bruegel. However, he lost his assets not long after receiving *The Seasons*.
- B. At first glance, the paintings look utterly original for their monumental presentation of ordinary activities. In reality, Bruegel adapted the subject matter from manuscript illuminations of seasonal activities in

the calendars of 15th-century books of hours.

- C. In particular, Bruegel was inspired by Netherlandish illuminator Simon Bening's landscapes in the 1515 *Da Costa Hours*. Bening had seen the Limbourg brothers' work in the *Très Riches Heures*.
 - D. Bruegel's monumental scale and vision for traditional world landscapes was a conceptual leap. He asserted the validity of making art about ordinary people doing ordinary things. *The Seasons* honors peasants and villagers, those most attuned to the Earth and its seasons.
 - E. In *The Harvesters*, there is humor, seen in a man sleeping under a tree. At the same time, Bruegel found dignity in the hard-working peasant. The bright, hazy sunlight conjures a thick atmospheric perspective.
 - F. *Return of the Herd*, a scene from late autumn, stresses the absence of warmth. Men and cattle struggle up a hill to the village on a cold day. The trees are bare.
 - G. *Hunters in the Snow* is also composed around a hillside, with an extensive view that opens up the middle ground and background. Below the hill is a village, with people on frozen ponds. The hunters are at the crest of the hill. To the left, a pig is roasted over an outdoor fire, a traditional scene for December pages in books of hours.
 - H. Despite its connections to various traditions, *The Seasons* series was totally original in its encompassing vision and grand scale.
- V. Bruegel continued the theme of months and seasons in two prints designed at the same time as *The Seasons*. Four prints were likely intended, but Bruegel completed only *Spring* and *Summer* before his death.
- A. The drawing for *Spring* includes in Dutch the names of the months depicted—March, April, and May. The engraving also includes the names of Bruegel and Cock, Van der Heyden's monogram, the names of the months in Latin, and two Latin inscriptions.
 - B. Spring is a civilized season here. People work in a formal garden. To the right, a well-dressed woman instructs the workers, her daughter at her side. Thus, class distinctions are sharply drawn.
 - C. Behind the garden, men shear sheep in a sheepfold. In the background, people enjoy singing, dancing, and other May Day activities.
 - D. The foreground figures are much larger than those in *The Seasons*, anticipating the later peasant scenes. Nature here is also more under human control.
- VI. Two late works that combine peasant scenes and landscapes have provoked a great deal of scholarly debate about their meaning. Bruegel may have had good reasons to make intentionally enigmatic pictures in the late 1560s. *The Beekeepers* bears a Dutch inscription: "He who knows where the nest is has

the knowledge, he who robs it has the nest.”

- A. The drawing style is similar to that of Bruegel’s print designs, meticulous and detailed yet atmospheric. Three beekeepers work in a yard, wearing protective masks. They have a strange, inhuman appearance. A boy perched in a tree behind them faces a church steeple.
- B. The significance of the proverb is puzzling. It refers to the pointlessness of knowledge unaccompanied by action. But how does that explain the image?
 - 1. The men have been described as robbers, looking for treasure (“the nest”), while the boy serves as their lookout.
 - 2. Another suggestion is that the boy has the audacity to climb a tree while the beekeepers stay on the ground. He will get what they will miss because he acts boldly.
 - 3. Yet another theory is that this is a religious allegory. The beehives refer to the Catholic Church, and the beekeepers, to the faithful. The Catholic Church was compared to a beehive in a 1569 Protestant critique.
- C. Van Mander wrote that Bruegel told his wife on his deathbed to destroy certain drawings. This statement has intrigued art historians. Were these politically oriented drawings criticizing Spanish rule? Bruegel had many court clients he did not want to offend. Did the works have religious meaning? Nothing about this haunting image seems clear.

VII. Another painting from late in Bruegel’s career, *Magpie on the Gallows*, is nearly as puzzling as *The Beekeepers*.

- A. A beautiful landscape with a commanding view suggests a perfect day in a Flemish village. People walk uphill from the village. Some dance in the shadow of a gallows.
- B. A bird sits on the gallows. Van Mander maintains that this magpie stood for “the gossips whom he [Bruegel] would deliver to the gallows.” Magpies have been associated with human gossip in various cultures, but which gossips would Bruegel wish to see hanged?
- C. What about the cross near the gallows? Does it indicate religious controversy, which certainly could lead to death under the Inquisition in the Spanish Netherlands?
- D. We don’t know which side of the religious and political controversy Bruegel was on. Did he side with the political rebels, which included many nobles, merchants, and Humanists, or with the Spanish Hapsburgs, from which he also drew patronage? Was he a Catholic, appalled by the blasphemy of iconoclasm, or a Protestant, who believed that traditional religious images might lead to idolatry? Bruegel, the

man and the artist, was careful not to let his contemporaries know.

Works Discussed:

Pieter Bruegel: *Landscape with a Fortified Town*, 1553, pen and ink drawing, 9" x 1'1¼", British Museum, London.

The Rabbit Hunt, 1560, etching, 8 7/16 x 11 3/8", The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

The Fall of Icarus, c. 1555–58, oil on canvas mounted on wood, 2'5" x 3'8", Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels.

The Seasons: The Harvesters, 1565, oil on panel, 3'10½" x 5'3¼", Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

The Seasons: Return of the Herd, 1565, oil on panel, 3'10" x 5'2½", Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

The Seasons: Hunters in the Snow, 1565, oil on panel, 3'10" x 5'3¼", Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

The Beekeepers, c. 1567–68, pen and brown ink on paper, 8" x 1', Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin.

Magpie on the Gallows, 1568, oil on panel, 1'6" x 1'8", Hessisches Landesmuseum, Darmstadt, Germany.

Simon Bening: *August*, page from the *Da Costa Hours*, c. 1515, illuminated manuscript, 6¾ x 5", British Library, London.

Pieter van der Heyden (after Bruegel): *Spring (Ver)*, 1570, engraving, overall: 9 x 11 5/16", image: 8 15/16 x 11 7/16", The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Essential Reading:

Snyder, *Northern Renaissance Art*. chapter 22.

Gibson, *Bruegel*.

Supplementary Reading:

Gibson, *Pleasant Places: The Rustic Landscape from Bruegel to Ruisdael*.

Orenstein, ed., *Pieter Bruegel the Elder: Drawings and Prints*.

Seipel, ed., *Pieter Bruegel the Elder at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna*.

Questions to Consider:

- 1. What do you think landscape meant to Bruegel? Did it provide an escape from the pressures of the modern world, or did it signify something more basic about life?
- 2. Does the painting *Magpie on the Gallows* have a positive or negative message?

Lecture Thirty-Six

Iconoclasm, War, and Signs of Revival

Scope: The second half of the 16th century was a difficult time in much of Europe. Wars raged within and between countries, many of them sparked by the divide between Roman Catholics and Protestants. In the Low Countries, Protestant rebellions against the harsh rule of Spain led to decades of fighting and, ultimately, the region's division into two countries. After Charles V abdicated in 1555, his son, Philip II, assumed the crown of Spain and the Netherlands. Philip's attempts to stop the spread of Protestantism prompted protests by local nobles and Protestant "hedge" preaching. Protestant iconoclasts destroyed paintings, sculptures, and other artworks in churches in 1566.

Much of Antwerp, the richest city in the Netherlands, was ravaged during the Spanish Fury of November 1576. After Spanish troops captured Antwerp in 1585, Protestants were forced to convert to Roman Catholicism or to leave. Many left, and Antwerp—aside from a 17th-century "Golden Age" of Catholic art—never regained its prominence. Amsterdam became the most important mercantile and finance center in Europe. Ultimately, the seven provinces of the northern Netherlands united as the Republic of the United Provinces; the 10 southern provinces were held for Spain and Catholicism. The United Provinces in the 17th century became home to such masters as Rembrandt and Vermeer.

One artist, Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617), stands as a transitional figure between the two centuries. Active in Haarlem in the 1580s and 1590s, this virtuoso engraver and woodcut designer admired the work of Dürer and other earlier printmakers but also strove to prove himself their equal. A trip to Italy in the early 1590s led him away from the style of Mannerism toward naturalism. This confident innovator led the way to new traditions, from the Northern Renaissance to the early modern era of Dutch art.

Outline

- I. In this last lecture, we'll look at the tumultuous years of the 16th century, which would eventually lead to the division of the Low Countries into two countries.
 - A. One last image of Antwerp, made in 1559 by Jan Massys, son of Quinten Massys, shows a reclining Flora, goddess of flowers and the commerce of courtesans. Her outstretched arm, holding several carnations, leads us into the picture, whose background shows the

Antwerp skyline. This painting conveys the cosmopolitan culture of Antwerp at its height—and right before its fall.

- B. Holy Roman Emperor Charles V ruled primarily from Spain, the most powerful part of the empire. He left governance of the Netherlands to relatives, first Margaret of Austria (1517–30), then Mary of Hungary (1531–40).
 - C. During this time, central authority was strengthened, and a civil service class allowed the Hapsburgs to bypass local nobility, who had traditionally held power. Because Ghent lost privileges after rebelling in 1539–40, other towns did not follow suit.
 - D. The worst troubles began with the abdication of Charles V in 1555. His son, Philip II, assumed the crown of Spain and the Netherlands in 1556. Mor's portrait shows Philip shortly before his accession to the throne.
 - E. Unlike Charles, who had been born in Ghent and enjoyed some loyalty in the Low Countries, Philip was seen as utterly Spanish, unsympathetic to Netherlanders' concerns and traditions of local authority. He left Brussels for Spain in 1559, leaving his half-sister, Margaret of Parma, to rule the Spanish Netherlands.
 - II. From the mid-1540s, Spain's attempts to control the spread of Protestantism in the Low Countries led to censorship and a ban on secret religious meetings. Outbreaks of plague and financial crises added to the upheaval.
 - A. Tensions came to a head in the 1560s. Local nobles withheld tax payments to the king to protest their lack of voice and Spanish policies. "Hedge" preachers, often radical Protestants, gained followers outside the cities. William of Orange led nobles' unsuccessful efforts to dissuade Philip from his harsh policies.
 - B. About 200 Netherlandish noblemen pressed a Petition of Compromise, which would require dissolution of the Inquisition in the Netherlands. An interim agreement to that effect led to more problems, including open hedge preaching by Jean Calvin's followers. In August 1566, iconoclasts began to destroy sculptures, paintings, and other items in churches, town by town, from south to north.
 - C. The Catholic response was strongest in the southern Netherlands, but Protestant worship was open in many areas of the Low Countries. An engraving by Frans Hogenberg shows *Iconoclasm in Antwerp*.
 - III. After the Petition of Compromise was annulled in favor of a new accord, nobility began to side with either the central government or the rebellion.
 - A. An army led by the Duke of Alba, sent by Philip II, arrived to reimpose strong rule and eliminate heresy. Ironically, much of the early rebellion had burned out—but the duke's actions rekindled it.

1. In 1568, Alba instituted the Council of Troubles, which sentenced thousands to death without trials. Victims, while mostly Protestants, included Catholic nobles who opposed Spain's absolutism.
 2. Alba imposed a 10 percent sales tax when the economy of the Spanish Netherlands was suffering.
- B.** These harsh "reforms" led to open rebellion against Spain and the beginning of the Eighty Years' War.
- C.** Much of Antwerp was ravaged during the Spanish Fury of November 1576, shown in another Hogenberg print. In 1584, William of Orange was assassinated. The next year, Antwerp fell to Spanish forces.
- D.** The war would continue for 60 more years, but its ultimate resolution began to take shape. The seven provinces of the northern Netherlands would join as the Republic of the United Provinces. The 10 southern provinces would be held for Spain and Catholicism.
- E.** After the Duke of Parma captured Antwerp, he gave residents a choice: convert to Catholicism or leave. Nearly half the population left, many of them for the northern Netherlands.
1. Antwerp never regained its commercial superiority.
 2. The city enjoyed a 17th-century "Golden Age" of Catholic art, led by Sir Peter Paul Rubens and Sir Anthony van Dyck.
- F.** Amsterdam became the most important financial and mercantile center in Europe. The Republic of the United Provinces' own 17th-century Golden Age featured the art of Rembrandt, Vermeer, and others.
- IV.** Artist Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617) can be considered a transitional figure from the 16th to the 17th century.
- A.** He lived in the northern Netherlands but had contact with Antwerp. His art began in the style of Mannerism but would eventually shift to a renewed naturalistic style.
- B.** German-born Goltzius apprenticed with Dirck Volkertsz Coornheert, through whom he received commissions for engraving work. In 1582, he opened his own engraving shop, where he designed prints and reproduced other artists' designs.
- C.** A central figure among Haarlem artists in the 1580s, Goltzius is said to have founded an art academy with the painter Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem and biographer and painter Karel van Mander.
- D.** Van Mander introduced Goltzius to the art of Bartholomaeus Spranger, who worked in the Mannerist style. Spranger's *Venus and Adonis* shows this elegant but artificial style, characterized by erotic themes and nudes.
1. Goltzius engraved some of Spranger's drawings, and his own designs became part of the Mannerist trend.
 2. His unique engraving style of lines that tapered and swelled gave a sense of rounded form and a sculptural quality to his work.
- E.** Goltzius also revived the chiaroscuro woodcut. *Proserpina* shows his Mannerist style, with an elongated nude figure and complex pose.
- F.** Goltzius worked with a maimed right hand, the result of falling into a fire as a child. His drawing of his hand shows its frozen position. In a Mannerist "trick," Goltzius imitates the look of an engraving.
- V.** Goltzius made engravings on a wide range of subjects as his career flourished. When his health began to suffer, he traveled to Italy in late 1590.
- A.** Many of the drawings from this trip reproduced famous statues from antiquity. Two drawings of the *Farnese Hercules* show the statue from the back. Goltzius seems to have been fascinated by the play of muscles in this 10-foot-high statue.
- B.** Goltzius also drew lively and sensitive portraits of other artists. *Portrait of Gianbologna* shows another northern artist, who became the most famous sculptor in Italy in the late 16th century.
- C.** The trip to Italy had profound consequences for Goltzius's art. After returning to the Netherlands, he never again reproduced other artists' work, and he abandoned Mannerism for a more naturalistic style tempered by Classicism.
- VI.** Goltzius turned to printmaking, studying especially Albrecht Dürer and Lucas van Leyden. *The Circumcision* asserts that engraving is a creative, not just a reproductive, act. It was part of a six-print series of the *Life of the Virgin Mary* made in 1593–94.
- A.** In *The Circumcision*, Goltzius based his design on a woodcut by Dürer but cleverly referred to Dürer's engraving style. At the time, collectors and artists were reviving the art of Dürer and Van Leyden.
- B.** According to Van Mander, Goltzius took a few impressions of *The Circumcision*, burned out a self-portrait, and smoked the prints to look old. Collectors thought they had bought Dürer prints until Goltzius claimed them. Goltzius managed to surpass Dürer in these "imitations."
- VII.** By 1600, Goltzius gave up printmaking for painting and drawing.
- A.** Goltzius made a few small landscape drawings. The one of a dune landscape near Haarlem shows a fertile, flat area but does not aggrandize it. It is closer to real topography and represents a new conception of traditional landscapes.
- B.** *Youth with Skull and a Tulip* refers to Van Leyden's *Young Man with a Skull*. Goltzius painstakingly imitated engraved lines with pen and ink.

Although he had given up engraving, he still loved the medium. This print juxtaposes the young man's face and tulip with the skull and hourglass. The Latin inscription reads, "Who can escape? No one."

- C. Goltzius was part of an artistic revival during a time of turmoil in the Netherlands. His town, Haarlem, would become an important art center in the first half of the 17th century.
- D. Goltzius was inspired by earlier Northern Renaissance art, but he also thought that he was as good as his predecessors. This confident innovator led the way to new traditions, from the Northern Renaissance to Dutch art of the early modern era.

VIII. This course began around 1400 with the court art of the first Duke of Burgundy, Philip the Bold. The panel paintings, sculpture, and manuscript illuminations of that time became less important during the next 200 years.

- A. Patronage changed to include upper-middle-class civil servants, merchants, and church laymen, marking a significant change from the patronage of the medieval period and even from that found in other parts of Renaissance Europe.
- B. With new patronage came new practices. The Modern Devotion movement emphasized personal religious experience, leading to devotional works of art for private residences. Portraiture, no longer the province of kings, increased from 1420.
- C. The self-confidence of artists rose, too—remember Van Eyck's motto, "as I can," and Dürer's self-documentation.
- D. Dürer's art marked a turning point for Northern Renaissance art around 1500. His interest in Italian art and its techniques had a major impact in the 16th century. He was a trailblazer for other artists.
- E. The period from 1500 to 1600 saw new subjects, such as landscapes and scenes of everyday life. This change was due in part to the Protestant Reformation, which made religious art inappropriate for some people.
- F. The production of ready-made paintings for an open market also developed alongside traditional patronage. Artists' workshops became more like assembly lines. All these changes in culture and art went hand in hand during the period we have studied.

Works Discussed:

Jan Massys: *Flora*, 1559, oil on panel, 3'8½" x 3'8½", Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg.

Antonis Mor: *Portrait of Philip II*, c. 1554, oil on panel, 1'4½" x 1', Museo del Prado, Madrid.

Frans Hogenberg: *Iconoclasm in Antwerp*, c. 1570, etching, 8 1/8 x 11 1/8", location not given.

Antwerp Town Hall during the Spanish Fury, 4 November 1576, 1576, engraving, 8¼ x 11", Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Hamburg.

Bartholomaeus Spranger: *Venus and Adonis*, c. 1595, oil on canvas, 5'4¼" x 3'5", Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

Hendrick Goltzius: *Proserpina*, c. 1588, chiaroscuro woodcut, 9¾" x 1'1¼", Staatliche Graphische Sammlungen, Munich.

Goltzius' Right Hand, 1588, drawing, 9" x 1' 5/8", Teylers Museum, Haarlem.

Farnese Hercules, 1591, drawing, 1'4½" x 1', Teylers Museum, Haarlem.

Portrait of Gianbologna, 1591, drawing, 1'2½" x 11¾", Teylers Museum, Haarlem.

The Circumcision, 1594, engraving, 1'6¾" x 1'2", British Museum, London.

Dune Landscape near Haarlem, c. 1603, drawing, 6 1/3 x 11 1/3", Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam.

Youth with Skull and a Tulip, 1614, pen and brown ink on paper, 1'6 1/8" x 1'2", The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.

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Supplementary Reading:

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Parker, *The Dutch Revolt*, rev. ed.

Van der Stock et al., *Antwerp: Story of a Metropolis, 16th–17th Century*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What does Goltzius's art tell us about the status of drawings at the end of the 16th century?
2. How has your understanding of what the Renaissance meant for northern European culture changed through exposure to the art of this time?

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Supplementary Reading:

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Parker, Geoffrey. *The Dutch Revolt*. Rev. ed. London and New York: Penguin Books, 1985. A relatively concise account of the complex events of the Eighty Years' War between Spain and the Netherlandish provinces.

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Internet Resources:

Artcyclopedia, www.artcyclopedia.com/index.html. Here, one can look up artists, movements, and artistic periods to find links to museum websites, image collections, and so on. The site also offers a chronological list of artists of the Northern Renaissance.

Art History Resources on the Web, witcombe.sbc.edu/ARTHLinks.html. Professor Christopher Witcombe of Sweetbriar College maintains this site, which has useful links to other websites and outlines their content. It covers a wide range of art history but contains a section on Northern Renaissance art specifically.

Louvre Museum, www.louvre.fr/llv/commun/home_flash.jsp?bmLocale=en. English-language website of the museum. Has wonderful features, such as a "tour" of Jan van Eyck's *Virgin and Child with Chancellor Rolin*, as well as search mechanisms for individual artists represented in the collections and objects from certain periods (such as drawings and prints from the 15th century).

National Gallery of Art, www.nga.gov/collection/gallery/euro15.htm. This section has online topic "tours" of the collection, with various Northern Renaissance subjects. Good coverage based on the National Gallery's collection.

Timeline of Art History (Metropolitan Museum of Art), www.metmuseum.org/toah/splash.htm. The content of this site is both wide-ranging and deep. Artists, periods, and special topics are all covered, using objects from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, but discussions are not limited to just these objects.

Web Gallery of Art, www.wga.hu. A compendium of works arranged by artists. The images are of good quality and the discussions of the works are generally

reliable. Offers a wider range of artists and more works by individual artists than comparable Web sites.